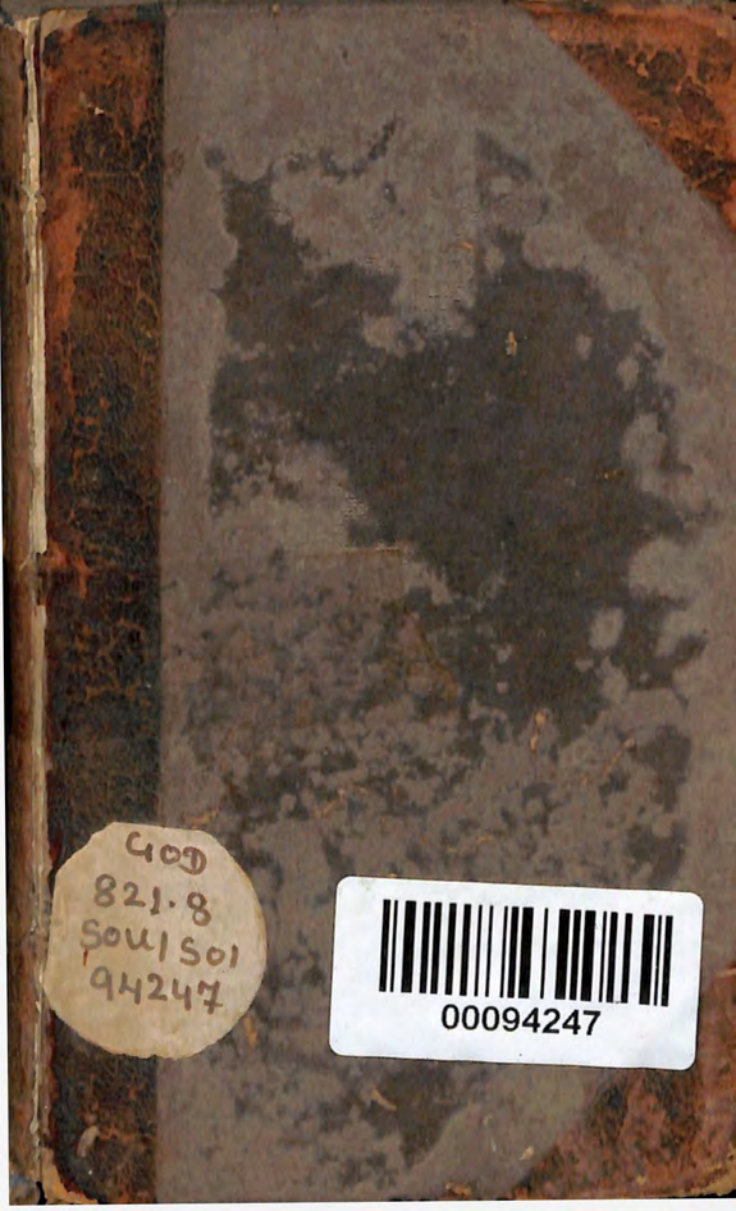
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BOMBAY BRANCH

OF THE

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BY THE AUTHORESS OF

ELLEN FITZARTHUR, AND THE WIDOW'S TALE.

(Mrs. Southey).

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD, EDINBURGH: AND
T. CADELL, STRAND, LONDON.

MDCCCXXVI.

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THE greater number of the pieces contained in this little Volume have appeared in BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE. A few unpublished Poems are now added to the Collection.

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ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY BOMBAY BRANCH

THE

BROKEN BRIDGE.

It was a lovely autumn morn,
So indistinctly bright,
So many-hued, so misty, clear,
So blent the glittering atmosphere,
A web of opal light!

The morning mist, from the hill top,
Sail'd off—a silvery flake—
But still in the under vale it lay,
Where the trees peer'd out like islands grey,
Seen dimly, at the dawn of day,
On a waveless pearly lake.

And again, when we reach'd the woody rise
That Boldre Church doth crown,
The filmy shroud was wafted by,
And, rejoicing in his victory,
The dazzling Sun look'd down.

We reach'd the Church, a two-mile walk,
Just as the bell begun;
Only the clerk was station'd there,
And one old man with silver hair,
Who warm'd him in the sun.

A grave-stone for his seat—one hand
On his old staff leant he;
The other fondly dallyed
With the bright curls of a young head
That nestled on his knee.

The child look'd up in the old man's face,
Look'd up and laugh'd the while—
Methought 'twas a beautiful sight to see
The reflected light of its innocent glee
(Like a sun-beam on a wither'd tree)
In the old man's quiet smile.

That simple group well harmonized
With the surrounding scene—
The old grey church, with its shadows deep,
Where the dead seem'd hush'd in sounder sleep;
And all beyond, where the sun shone bright,
Touching the tomb-stones with golden light,
And the graves with emerald green.

And a redbreast from the elms hard by
His joyous matins sung;
That music wild contrasted well
With the measured sound of the old church bell,
In its low square tower that swung.

I look'd, and listen'd, and listen'd still,
But word spake never a one;
And I started like one awakened
From a trance, when my young companion said,
"Let's walk till the bell has done."

So we turn'd away by the shady path
That winds down that pleasant hill—
Leaving the church-yard to the right

High up, it brought us soon in sight
Of the clear stream, so sparkling bright,
That turns old Hayward Mill.

A lovely scene! but not therefore
Young Edmund's choice, I doubt;
No, rather that with barbed snare
For sport he oft inveigled there
The perch and speckled trout.

Stopt was the busy mill-wheel now,
Snareless the rippling brook,
And up the finny people leapt;
As if they knew that danger slept
And Edmund! he had well nigh wept
For lack of line and hook.

"Look what a fish! the same I'll swear
That I hook'd yesterday—
He's a foot long from head to tail—
The fellow tugg'd like any whale,
And broke my line—it's very true,
Though you laugh, miss! you always do
At everything I say."—

" Nay, gentle coz ! I did but smile—
But—*was* he a foot long ?"—
" Ay, more, a foot and half—near two—
There, there, there's no convincing *you*,
One might as well to an old shoe
Go whistle an old song."—

" Gramercy, coz ! I only ask'd,
In admiration strong."—
" Ay, but you look at one so queer—
Oh ! that I had my tackle here,
You should soon see—well, never fear
I'll have him yet ere long."—

" Ay, doubtless—but, dear Edmund ! now
Be murd'rous thoughts far hence,
This is a day of peace and rest,
And should diffuse in every breast
Its holy influence."—

Such desultory chat we held,
Stil' idly saunt'ring on
Towards the old crazy bridge, that led
Across the stream by the mill-head—
" Heyday !" said I, " 'tis gone !"

And gone it was, but planks and piles
Lay there, a fresh-brought load,
And, till a better bridge was made,
Flat stones across the brook were laid,
So one might pass dry-shod.

One with firm foot and steady eye,
Dry-shod might pass the brook—
But now, upon the further side,
A woman and a child we spied,
And those slippery stones the woman eyed
With vex'd and angry look.

And the child stood there—a pretty boy,
Some seven years old look'd he,
Limber and lithe as a little fawn,
And I marvell'd much that he sprang not on
With a boy's activity.

But his head hung down like a dew-bent flower,
And he stood there helplessly;
And the woman (an old ill-favour'd crone!)
Scowl'd at him, and said, in a sharp cross tone,
"You're always a plague to me!"—

" What ails you, my little man?" said I;
" Such a light free thing as you
Should bound away like a nimble deer
From stone to stone, and be over here
Before one could well count two."—

The child look'd up—to my dying day
That look will haunt my mind.
The woman look'd too, and she tuned her throat
As she answer'd me, to a softer note,
And, says she, " The poor thing's blind.

" His father (who's dead) was my sister's son;
Last week his mother died too.
He's but a weakly thing, you see,
Yet the parish has put him upon me,
Who am but ill to do.

" And his mother made him more helpless still
Than else he might have been,
For she nursed him up like a little lamb,
That in winter time has lost its dam;—
Such love was never seen!

"To be sure he was her only one,
A helpless thing, you see;
So she toil'd and toil'd to get him bread,
And to keep him neat, 'twas her pride, she said—
Well, 'tis a hard thing, now she's dead,
To have him thrown on me.

"And now we shall be too late for church,
For he can't get over, not he!
I thought the old bridge did well enough
But they're always at some alt'ring stuff,
Hind'ring poor folks like we."

I look'd about, but from my side
Edmund was gone already,
And with the child claspt carefully
Across the stream, back bounded he,
With firm foot, light and steady.

"And the woman," said I, "won't you help her too?
Look there she waits the while."—
"Hang her, old cat! if I do," quoth he,
"To souse her into the midst 'twill be".
For my life I could not but smile.

So we left her to cross as best she might,
And I turn'd to the sightless child;
His old white hat was wound about
With a rusty crape, and fair curls waved out
On a brow divinely mild.

And the tears still swam in his large blue eyes,
And hung on his sickly cheek—
Those eyes with their clouded vacancy,
That looked *towards*, but not *at* me,
Yet spoke to my heart more touchingly
Than the brightest could ever speak.

I took his little hand in mine,
('Twas a delicate small hand,)
And the poor thing soon crept close to me,
With a timid familiarity,
No heart could e'er withstand.

By this time the woman had hobbled up—
"Ah, Goody! what, safe ashore?"
Quoth Edmund—"I knew without help from me
You'd paddle across—" Askance look'd she,
But spake not a word, so in company
We moved on to church all four.

But I felt the child's hand, still held in mine,
With a shrinking dread compress'd;—
"Do you love to go to church?" I said—
"Yes;" and he hung down his little head,
"But I love the churchyard best."—

"The churchyard, my pretty boy!—And why?
Come tell me why, and how?"—
"Because—because—" and the poor thing
Sobb'd out the words half whispering—
"'Cause mammy is there now."—

Feelings too deep for utterance
Thrill'd me a moment's space,
At last—"My little friend," said I,
"She's gone to live with God on high,
In Heaven, his dwelling-place.

"And if you're good, and pray to Him,
And tell the truth alway,
And bear all hardships patiently,
You'll go there too."—"But when?" said he,
"Shall I go there to-day?"—

" Nay—you must wait till God is pleased
To call you to his rest."—
" When will that be?" he ask'd again.—
" Perhaps not yet, my child."—" Oh! then,
I love the churchyard best."—

And to the churchyard we were come,
And close to the church door—
And the little hand I held in mine,
Still held, loath was I to resign;
And from that hour the face so mild,
And the soft voice of that orphan child,
Have haunted me evermore.

ON THE NEAR PROSPECT OF LEAVING HOME.—1818.

FAREWELL! farewell, beloved home!
Haven of rest! a long farewell.
Where'er my weary footsteps roam,
With thee shall faithful mem'ry dwell.

They tell me other bowers will rise
As fair, in fancy's future view—
They little think what tender ties,
Dear home! attach my heart to you.

Their happy childhood has not playd,
Like mine, beneath thy shelt'ring roof;
Thou hast not foster'd, in thy shade,
Their after-years of happier youth.

They cannot know, they have not proved
The sympathies that make thee dear—
They have not here possess'd and loved—
They have not lost and sorrow'd here.

In all around, they cannot see
Relics of hopes, and joys o'ercast—
They have not learnt to live like me
On recollections of the past;

To watch (as misers watch their gold)
Tree, shrub, or flower, (frail, precious trust!)
Planted and rear'd in days of old,
By hands now mouldering in the dust;

To sanctify peculiar places,
Associated in mem'ry's glass,
With circumstances, times, and faces,
That like a dream before me pass.

These are the feelings—*this* the band,
Dear home! that knits my heart to thee—
No heart but mine can understand
How strong that secret sympathy.

Therefore, of scenes more fair than thee,
They kindly speak to soothe mine ear—
Yes—fairer other scenes may be,
But never any half so dear.

SONNET.—1818.

Autumnal leaves and flow'rets ! ling'ring last—
Pale sickly children of the waning year !
A lovelier race shall yet succeed ye here,
When Nature (her long wintry torpor past)
O'er the brown woods and naked earth doth cast
Her vernal mantle—From its prison cell,
Through mould and bark, the struggling germ shall swell,
Bright buds, and beauteous blossoms, following fast—
Oh ! I was wont a deep delight to taste,
When the first primrose rear'd her modest head,
And early violet on the wintry waste,
The renovated soul of sweetness shed !
And they will wake again—And I shall be,
Mine own beloved home ! far, far from them and thee !

SUNDAY EVENING.

I SAT last Sunday evening,
From sunset even till night,
At the open casement, watching
The day's departing light.

Such hours to me are holy,
Holier than tongue can tell,
They fall on my heart like dew
On the parched heather-bell.

The Sun had shone bright all day—
His setting was brighter still,
But there sprang up a lovely air
As he dropt down the western hill.

The fields and lanes were swarming
With holy-day folks in their best,
Released from their six days' cares
By the seventh day's peace and rest.

I heard the light-hearted laugh,
The trampling of many feet—
I saw them go merrily by,
And to me the sight was sweet.

There's a sacred soothing sweetness,
A pervading spirit of bliss,
Peculiar from all other times,
In a Sabbath eve like this.

Methinks, though I know not the day,
Nor beheld those glad faces, yet all
Would tell me that Nature was keeping
Some solemn festival.

The steer and the steed in their pastures
Lie down with a look of peace,
As if they knew 'twas commanded
That this day their labours should cease.

The lark's vesper song is more thrilling
As he mounts to bid Heaven good night;
The brook sings a quieter tune—
The sun sets in lovelier light—

The grass, the green leaves, and the flowers,
Are tinged with more exquisite hues,
More odorous incense from out them
Steams up with the evening dews.

So I sat last Sunday evening
Musing on all these things,
With that quiet gladness of spirit
No thought of this world brings—

I watch'd the departing glory,
Till its last red streak grew pale,
And Earth and Heaven were woven
In Twilight's dusky veil.

Then the lark dropt down to his mate
By her nest on the dewy ground;
And the stir of human life
Died away to a distant sound—

All sounds died away—the light laugh—
The far footstep—the merry call—
To such stillness, the pulse of one's heart
Might have echoed a rose leaf's fall—

And, by little and little, the darkness
Waved wider its sable wings,
Till the nearest objects and largest
Became shapeless confused things—

And, at last, all was dark—then I felt
A cold sadness steal over my heart,
And I said to myself, "Such is life!
So its hopes and its pleasures depart!

"And when night comes—the dark night of age,
What remaineth beneath the sun
Of all that was lovely and loved?
Of all we have learnt and done?

"When the eye waxeth dim, and the ear
To sweet music grows dull and cold,
And the fancy burns low, and the heart—
Oh, Heavens! *can* the heart grow old?

" Then, what remaineth of life
But the lees, with bitterness fraught?
What then?"——But I check'd as it rose,
And rebuked that weak, wicked thought.

And I lifted mine eyes up, and, lo!
An answer was written on high
By the finger of God himself,
In the depths of the dark blue sky.

There appeared a sign in the east—
A bright, beautiful, fixed star!
And I look'd on its steady light
Till the evil thoughts fled afar—

And the lesser lights of Heaven
Shone out with their pale soft rays,
Like the calm unearthly comforts
Of a good man's latter days—

And there came up a sweet perfume
From the unseen flowers below,
Like the savour of virtuous deeds,
Of deeds done long ago;

Like the mem'ry of well-spent time—
  Of things that were holy and dear—
Of friends, " departed this life
  In the Lord's faith and fear."

So the burthen of darkness was taken
  From my soul, and my heart felt light;
And I laid me down to slumber
  With peaceful thoughts that night.

THE MARINER'S HYMN.

LAUNCH thy bark, Mariner!
Christian! God speed thee—
Let loose the rudder bands—
Good angels lead thee—
Set thy sails warily,
Tempests will come—
Steer thy course steadily,
Christian! steer home!

Look to the weather-bow,
Breakers are round thee—
Let fall the plummet now,
Shallows may ground thee.

Reef in the foresail, there!—
Hold the helm fast!—
So—let the vessel wear—
There swept the blast.

"What of the night, watchman?
What of the night?"
—"Cloudy—all quiet—
No land yet—all's right!"
Be wakeful—be vigilant—
Danger may be
At an hour when all seemeth
Securest to thee.

How! gains the leak so fast?
Clear out the hold—
Hoist up thy merchandize—
Heave out thy gold;—
There—let the ingots go—
Now the ship rights—
Hurra! the harbour's near—
Lo! the red lights!

Slacken not sail yet
At inlet or island;
Straight for the beacon steer,
Straight for the high land—
Crowd all thy canvass on,
Cut through the foam—
Christian! cast anchor now—
Heaven is thy home!

SONNET,

WRITTEN ON READING TASSO'S LIFE.

REST, weary spirit, from thy labours past—
Thy doubts, thy wrongs, thy painful wanderings o'er,
Through troubled seas, thy bark has reached at last
The quiet haven of a friendly shore.
Yes—"after death"—around thy pallid brow
They wreathed the laurel, long, too long denied,
For which, in all the ambitious ardent glow
Of conscious worth, thy once proud spirit sigh'd.
But when the mortal scene was closing fast
Around thee, Tasso! on that proffer'd crown
What cold, contemptuous glances did'st thou cast!
Earth could no longer chain the spirit down
That, fixing on a heavenly crown its trust,
Bequeath'd the earthly to its mouldering dust.

SONNET.

What if the tale was true, (as some believe,)
That Tasso's love to Leonora gave?
Oh happy Leonora, to receive
Such fame-conferring vows from such a slave!
Darling of many hearts! Of short-lived fame
The favoured minion! born in courts to shine!
Yet, but for *him*, for *his* illustrious name,
What deathless annals had recorded thine?
These are thy triumphs, Genius! flames that burn
With bright'ning glory through the mists of time—
When earth-born spirits to the earth return,
Thine, mounting from thine ashes, soars sublime,
And where *they* moulder; Contemplation's eye
With awful rev'rence dwells, when kings forgotten lie

CHILDHOOD.

ALMOST the happiest visitings of which my mind is at any time sensible, are those reminiscences of childhood, streaming in such vivid beauty across the chequered pathway of mature life, that frequently the past —the very past—seems recalled into actual existence, and I feel and think, and weep and smile again, with the heart of a child! Ay, and I would not exchange my sensations at such moments for half the pleasures (so called) that, as we advance in life, froth and sparkle in our mingled chalice. I am sure the frequent recurrence of such feelings is beneficial to the human heart—that it helps to purify—to re-organize, if I may so express myself, its best affections, so early repressed in the cold atmosphere of worldly intercourse, restoring a sort of youthful elasticity to its nobler powers, and, at the same time, a meek and

child-like sense of entire dependence—no longer, indeed, on the tender earthly guardians of our helpless infancy, but on our Father which is in heaven—*their* Father and ours—in whose sight we are all alike helpless, alike children.

Our reminiscences of youth are not half so delightful. In the first place, they are more associated with *persons* and *circumstances*, than with God and Nature, and with our earliest, ever our *best* friends. And who has stepped on a few, a very few years beyond those of childhood, without having been made sensible, by painful experience, that this world is not one of unmixed happiness? Disappointments arise, like little clouds at first, too soon perhaps congregating into one heavy mass. The things, so delightful in prospect, prove on attainment unsatisfactory, or worse than unsatisfactory; yea, gall and wormwood to us; or, leading us on, like marsh-fires, through bog and briar, over rough ways and even, they treacherously vanish from our sight, leaving us spent and heart-sick in the vain pursuit. Or say we are every way successful—that Providence rewards our strenuous and honourable perseverance by the attainment of its object,

and that the object, when obtained, gratifies our most sanguine anticipations; still, is the fruition perfect? Are there no specks upon the ripened fruit—no eating canker in its core? Are none missing from among the dear ones who should rejoice in our success? Are no eyes closed in the long sleep, that should have sparkled in the reflected light of our happiness? Is no tongue silenced in the grave, that would have blessed God for blessing us? Are they *all* there? Oh, heaven! how little to be hoped! And if but *one* is missing, what shall replace the void? who shall say the fruition *is perfect?*

But suppose we are so peculiarly favoured—it is an awful exemption—as to escape common cares and crosses, and even to arrive at full maturity, still fenced about and sheltered by the guardian trees under whose shadow we grew up; suppose all this to be, yet much will have occurred in the advance of intellect, and in the natural course of things, to temper the exuberance of youthful happiness. Yes! in the advance of intellect; for shall we not have acquired the knowledge of good and evil, and that by sin "came death into the world, and all our woe?"

And in the natural course of things—for, by the time we are men and women, what alterations must have taken place in the persons, and things, and scenes, all woven together in our hearts by the magic of early association—by the time we are men and women, how many are gone down into the dust of those humble faithful friends, whose kind familiar faces beamed ever with such indulgent fondness on our happy childhood? Old servants, who waited perhaps on our parents' parents—whose zealous attachment to them, having passed on as an inheritance (and there are few more valuable) to their immediate descendants, had become towards their offspring—towards ourselves, an almost idolatrous affection. Grey-headed labourers, whose good-natured indulgence had so patiently suffered us to derange their operations in the garden or the hayfield, with the grave mimicry of laborious exertion. Some grateful pensioner of our family—some neat old widow, who was wont to welcome us to her little cottage with a hoarded offering of fruit or flowers, or maybe a little rabbit, white as the driven snow, or a young squirrel, or a dormouse, poor captives of the woods!

devoted victims of our tormenting fondness! Or the permitted intruder—privileged, as it were, by long sufferance, to claim the comforts of a draught of warm beer, and a meal of broken victuals by the kitchen fire; half mendicant, half pedlar, his back bowed down by the heavy pack, from which it was almost as inseparable as is that of a camel from its natural protuberance—a few white hairs thinly sprinkled over a deeply-furrowed brow, and straggling across a cheek whose ruddy tinge, still glowing through the dusky complexion peculiar to his people, told of free and constant communion with the winds of heaven, as they blow in their healthful freshness over moor and mountain, headland and sea-coast—and the eye deep set under that shaggy ridge of eyebrow—The eye, with all its quick perceptions, its keen discrimination, its shrewd meanings, its habitual watchfulness, its black sparkling lustre, almost undimmed as yet by sixty and five years of toil and travel, over the roughest ways of this world's rough thoroughfare! And then that venerable beard! so white and silky, that the old man stroked ever and anon with fond complacency, as it flowed with pa-

triarchal majesty over his ample chest! And the great loose wrapping garment of brown camlet, girt about with a broad leather girdle, to which were appended two long pouches, containing spices and aromatic gums, "precious," would the hoary Israelite aver, (and he was ever wont to produce those fragrant wares with a mien of peculiar importance, a sort of mysterious dignity,) "precious as those brought into Judea by the Queen of the South, when she came to behold the glory and listen to the wisdom of King Solomon."

At such moments, doubtless, the ancient splendour of his nation swam, as in a glass, before the mental vision of the old Hebrew, wafted, as it were, towards him by the peculiar odours of those rich spices, and he thought of the beauty of Jerusalem, and the magnificence of the Temple, and of the riches of Solomon, the gold and silver and ivory, the apes and peacocks, and the precious almug trees—and then it might be, that his bearing became loftier for a moment, and he forgot that all these things had passed away—that his kindred and his tribe and his people were scattered over the face of the earth, a despised

and persecuted remnant, "a hissing and a reproach" amongst all nations, and that he himself was poor, old, and houseless, scoffed at and reviled by the ignorant, the wanton, and the heartless, and that the very children, the little village children, towards whom his kind old heart yearned tenderly, fled in terror from "the wicked Jew," or annoyed him as he passed with their puny insults.

How unintentionally (from attempting a slight sketch, a mere outline of generalities) have I been betrayed into the delineation of thy portrait, old Isaac! Well—be it so—It were worth tracing by the pencil of an abler artist—I see thee now—even such as I have described thee—luxuriously established in a warm corner of our wide kitchen fire-place—thy huge, dusky, knotted staff slipped through the straps of that lumbering pack, and the triple knot of the red bundle, both of which are carefully deposited on the bench beside thee.

The faithful companion of thy wanderings, the rough-haired, fox-coloured, bandy-legged cur, with one ear cocked up so knowingly, posted between thy knees, and from thence intently eyeing that at-

tractive platter, on which the kitchen damsel is heaping up a meal of savoury scraps, whereof he hopes incontinently to partake with thee. And thine own eyes, friend Isaac, are not less curiously intent in noting the preparation of that same olio—and earnestly dost thou enjoin the good-humoured lass, who is preparing the regale for her old acquaintance, to take special heed, that there entereth no scrap of the forbidden thing—no portion of swine's flesh amongst the ingredients thereof—Well thou art assured that kind-hearted maiden will not knowingly cheat the old man, or make light of the Jew's conscientious scruples. But all are not so kind to thee; and, if thou wert given to complaint, many a tale could'st thou tell, that might kindle on Christian cheeks a burning blush for the indignities heaped on the unoffending Jew. —Once—(the smart of that bitter jest being yet recent)—thou didst relate how, being sore spent with a long day's travel through deep and wintry ways, thou camest at nightfall to a little village alehouse, wherein the hearth blazed invitingly, and good entertainment was promised to the weary traveller—so, blessing the God of Abraham who had brought

thee to that safe abiding place, thou enteredst therein, and taking thy place at humble distance from the Christians assembled round the hearth, wert content to feel, even so far off, the kindly warmth of the glowing peat and crackling faggots flashing against thy weather-beaten face, and the outspread palms of thine old withered hands.—And when all were served, thy humble meal was set before thee, respecting which thou hadst not failed to whisper the prohibitory charge with unoffending meekness, and thou wert about to break thy long fast, with cheered and grateful heart—when lo! the well-known sounds broke forth beside thee—the sound of derision and mockery, and thou wert bid "be honest for once, if a Jew could be honest—and taste and own the delicious flavour of the pork meat, wherewithal thy mess was daintily seasoned."—"Dat vast hard to bear, for me vast very hungry," said Isaac, when he had told his little tale of wrongs; "but de Jew mosh bear all—so, me did eat my dry bread, and blesh God, and forgif dem."

Ah, cunning Isaac! well choosest thou thy time to display thy store of rare and curious merchandize!

A glance of that remnant of edging (just enough for a cap) and the hope of wheedling it from thee a bargain, will be worth to thee a mess like Benjamin's! —And that other maiden—how courteously she gives into thine old bony, vein-embossed hand, that comforting cup of warm, white-frothing ale! her eyes wandering the while towards that beautiful gold brooch—"*real* gold, set round with real rubies, that looks as if it were made on purpose to hold her sweetheart's hair, the honest price whereof *should* be ten shillings," but which, for her sake, "for the sake of her pretty face, God bless it!" thou wilt let her have for half-a-crown. Happy girl!—But there stands one, a human relic of old-fashioned times, who frowns reproval of such vain extravagance.—When *she* began the world, "a young servant girl thought of putting out her little savings to interest, or getting together a few creditable things, a good bed at least, and a chest of drawers, against she came to settle and have a family; but now, a silly wench, without a good smock to her back, will spend a month's wages in a pack of trumpery, fit for nothing but to figure out a puppet-show Madam."

Ah, Goody! those were good old times, but we live in wicked new ones, and Isaac's lures triumph over thy rhetoric;—a little ungrateful of thee, by the by, to employ it to his detriment—when did he ever forget—at which of his annual visitations, to replenish thy mull gratis with a portion of his best rappee?—that which thou lovest—uncontaminated with aught of modern outlandish intermixture?—and even now—placable Isaac!—see, he tenders the accustomed tribute;—and more—he has not forgotten thy child—the child of thy master's child—thy darling—the spoiled darling of thine age—she whom thou religiously believest has not her fellow among all the children of this degenerate age—a scion from the true old stock.

Isaac also arrogates to himself a peculiar interest in thy darling's fate—for did he not foretell the important event of her first appearance in this nether sphere? About a month before her entrance thereupon, (enlightened, probably, by pretty certain indications,) the old man having transacted his annual traffic, wound up his thanks and his farewell to the family, with the oracular remark, that "next time old Isaac

should call, dere would be one fine young shentelmans, or beautiful little missy"—the latter, he inclined to think, for reasons best known to himself, (the old man pretended to some degree of occult science,) and he would be sure to bring a present for "de little lady." And, faithful to his promise, the next winter old Isaac (whose first inquiry was for "little Missy," and there she was, sure enough) put into her baby arms a little artificial rose-tree in its pot of painted card-paper, and the kind old man bestowed a blessing with his gift, which latter was, he said, the work of his "own *shild*—his good daughter, Leah!" Isaac had then a little home, in some narrow alley of a large distant city—and that dutiful child abode there, and her loving welcome made it a paradise to the old man, in the short and far-off intervals of his lonely wanderings. Once he returned at the appointed time, but there was no one to receive him—the door was locked—the shutter closed—no smoke arose from the chimney—his Leah was cold in her grave. From that time, Isaac was literally and in good sooth "a stranger and a pilgrim upon earth." But he loved to speak of his "dear

Leah! his good *shild*," to those who could feel for the poor Jew, and especially to his old friend—the faithful nurse of little Missy—the patroness of all who were afflicted or distressed, or borne down by oppression or unmerited contumely.

Well—old Isaac has replenished her little snuff-box, and she is curiously inspecting his store of knitting-needles and nutmeg-graters—and there, close behind her—now creeping closer still, now slipping round, half hidden by Goody's apron—peeps "little Missy"—for the sound of a well-known voice has lured her from her lessons, (no very difficult seduction,) and she has stolen into the kitchen—the forbidden precincts—and she has spied out her old friends, Isaac and his dog;—and in a moment she stands beside the old man's knee, and her tiny hands are patting Tinker's head, and her merry tongue is bidding both welcome—both in a breath—Isaac and Tinker; and her young eyes are roving curiously towards the well-known pack, from which many a little watch, many pretty box and pincushion is sure to be purchased annually, in compliance with the baby-longing, seldom disciplined by denial.

And great joy and profound admiration doth old Isaac manifest at the sight of "little Missy,"—profound admiration at her wonderful growth, albeit, she might, at eight years old, pair for stature with the tiniest elf that waits in the court circle of the Fairy Queen, under the broad shadow of a fern leaf. And Isaac has not forgotten "little Missy"—and lo! from an inner recess of that mysterious cabinet, forth draws he sundry coloured cards covered with cotton, and curiously gilted with rows of shining—lances are they?—spears to transfix larks?—or spits to roast them? Neither, in truth, but harmless needles (such, seemingly, as were used in Brobdignag)—valuable implements of housewifery, fraught with peculiar virtues, and not elsewhere to be obtained for love or money. So affirmeth Isaac, on presenting one, (slowly extracted from the precious file,) his annual offering to "little Missy;"—and "little Missy" graciously accepts the same—graciously and gratefully—she means to be *very* grateful, implicitly believing in the intrinsic value of that costly gift, however puzzled in her own mind as to what purpose she shall apply it—"Isaac's first present,"—

the first year of her birth, (which was carefully set by for her till she was old enough to have it in her own keeping,) " was a much prettier present, she thinks. Not, she dares say, more valuable, because Isaac says the needles are worth so much!—but she does not *much* love needles,—she always loses them, or pricks her fingers with them,—and she *hates* sewing; but the little sham rose-tree *was* a beautiful thing!—and she has got it still, standing in a flower-pot just like life,—with moss, *real* moss, about the roots, and a full-blown rose, with ever so many buds, all growing upon one stem, with their green leaves about them!—Oh, *that was* a beautiful present!—and dear old Isaac was *so good* to bring it for her!—and she will love Isaac and Tinker as long as she lives!

And Nursie will love them too;—ay, Isaac and Tinker,—because her darling patronises both, and because Isaac has the sense to see all the darling's perfections. And, " after all, he *is* an honest old soul,—and to be sure that edging *is* cheap, she must own *that*,—and if the brooch *is* gold,——and she herself does not care if she buys some trifle for old

acquaintance' sake." Ah, cunning Isaac! most persuasive of pedlars!—What female heart can withstand the temptations of thy pack, and of thy honied tongue?

After many annual visits paid and welcomed, a year came, and passed away,—a whole year,—and old Isaac came not. About January had been the usual time of his periodical apparition,—about the middle, or toward the latter end of January. Generally, it chanced that there was snow upon the ground; and so, when snow began to fall about that season, it was looked on as a herald of the old man's approach;—and hitherto he had not failed to present himself at the door, within a few days of the usual period, swinging off the snow-flakes from his old hat, and slipping aside his cumbrous pack, in full assurance of the admission never denied him at ————. It was pleasant to note that humble confidence of courteous welcome. It is pleasant to mark the least link of that great chain, which draws, or *should draw*, together all Christian hearts, by the reciprocation of kindly offices, and ennobling grati-

tude, and by a sense of entire and general dependence on the universal Benefactor.

But in the year I spoke of, January came, and the snow fell, and almost the whole stock of tapes, and bobbins, and needles, was expended in the house; and from day to day its renewal was deferred, for such small wares had from "auld lang syne" been yearly purchased of Isaac, and "one would not but wait a little while for the poor old man." But he was waited for more than "a little while," and very hard weather set in. The river was frozen all over, and the country people walked over it to market, and the boys built a house on it with great blocks of ice. The little birds came famishing to the window-sills, and even into the dwellings of man; for the running brooks became steel, and the soft earth iron, and the snow,—the hard, glittering snow,—lay deep all over the country; in many places choking up the high-roads, and covering the tops of the highest hedges; and in less frequented ways,—over commons, and wastes, and in coppice dingles, and in the sinuous clefts of the hills,—not an indication of track, or pathway, not a human foot-mark, nor a

single hoof-print, was discernible; and by those intricate ways, connected with the small hamlets, where he carried on his yearly traffic, it was old Isaac's wont to travel,—and now he came not!—And, "Poor Isaac!"—"Poor old soul!"—was often sorrowfully uttered in the family:—"What can have become of him? The old man grows feeble, too, and the days are so short!"—And inquiring eyes were strained, early and late, in quest of his tall, solitary figure, towards the quarter where it might be expected to appear, breaking the dreary horizontal line, where, reversing the general effect of nature, the black sky was seen descending, like a leaden vault, to the verge of the white desert beneath.

Early and late, anxious looks were sent in quest of the aged wanderer, into the dark cheerless morning, and more earnestly still into the lowering twilight. And if the dogs barked after nightfall, and an approaching step was heard, willing feet hastened to the door, and ready hands withdrew the bolts, and glad tongues were tuning to exclaim, "Come in, come in, good Isaac!" But January passed, and Fe-

bruary slipt away. The snow melted from off the face of the earth, the unfrozen brooks ran rapidly again, and the little birds sang merrily, for sweet Spring was come, but the old man came not. He never came again.

He was long remembered—long spoken of—long missed by every individual of the family. But I missed him most, and remembered him longest. Peculiarly, even at that early age, a creature of habit, inanimate things themselves were playfellows to me, a solitary child. Clinging fondly to all I knew and loved, and to all early associations, it pained me to miss the most insignificant object I had been long accustomed to behold; and scarcely a leaf or flower dropt from its stalk but I *did* miss it, and mourn that I should see it no more. And "Poor old Isaac! Poor Tinker!"—Many Januarys passed, and for many after seasons the snow fell upon the earth, and melted from off it, before I ceased, at sight of the first flakes, to exclaim thus in mournful recollections.—And this *was sorrow*—real sorrow—the beginning of sorrow, and therefore (trivial as some may deem it) a touching and an awful thing to contemplate. Who

would gaze without a thrill of intense feeling on the few first drops that ooze slowly through the straining timbers of some mighty dike, previous to the bursting up of its imprisoned waters? And who can look but with deep and tender emotion on the first prelusive tears that escape through the unclosing flood-gates of human sorrow?

Yes,—by the time we start forward on the career of youth, if even our nearest and dearest friends still encircle us, how many of those persons to whom we were linked by habit or affection, (though in far less powerful bands,) must have finished their allotted race! Even irrational creatures,—the very animals that were wont to range about the house and fields,—many of them perhaps our familiar friends and playmates. Not one of these can have dropt down into the dust unmissed; and in the world we are entering, how many of the objects we shall most eagerly pursue, may fail to afford us half the gratification we have known in those childish innocent attachments! Our very pleasures,—our most perfect enjoyments in mature life, bring with them a certain portion of disquietude,—a craving after

fresher, or higher enjoyments,—an anxious calculation on the probable stability of those already ours, —a restless anticipation of the future. And *there*, in that very point, consists the great barrier separating youth from childhood. The child enjoys everything that *is*, abstractedly from all reference to the past, all inquiry into the future. He feels that he *is* happy, and satisfied with that blest perception, searches not into the nature, or probable duration of his felicity.

There may be,—there *are* in after life, intervals of far sublimer happiness; for if Thought, if Knowledge bringeth a curse with it, casting as it were the taint of corruption and the shadow of death over all that in this world seemed fair, and good, and lasting, and perfect, reason, enlightened by revelation, and sustained by faith, hath power to lift up that gloomy veil, and to see beyond it "the glory which shall be revealed hereafter."—But, with the exception of such moments,—when the heart communes with Heaven,—when our thoughts are in a manner like the angels ascending and descending on those bright beams of celestial intercourse,—what feelings of

the human mind can be thought so nearly to resemble those of the yet guiltless inhabitants of Eden, as the sensations of a young and happy child? It is true, he has been told and taught to read the story of "man's first disobedience and his fall." He has been told that there is such a thing as death, and that it happeneth to all men. It has even been explained to him, with the simple illustrations best calculated to impress the awful subject on his young mind; and his earnest eyes have filled with tears, at hearing that such or such a dear friend, on whose knee he has been wont to sit, whose neck he has often clasped so lovingly, is taken away out of the world, and buried under the earth in the churchyard. His eyes will fill with tears,—his little bosom will heave with sobs at this dismal hearing, and for a few brief moments his grief refuseth to be comforted. But then he is told that the dear friend is gone to God,—that his *spirit* is gone to God to live for ever, and be always happy in Heaven,—and that if he is a good child he will some day go to Heaven also, and live always with him there.

He listens to this with the same joyful eagerness

as if he were promised to go the next day in a fine coach, to spend the whole day with the friend whose *absence*, more than whose *death*, his little heart deplores so bitterly. He cannot conceive death. He cannot yet be made sensible that it hath entered into the world with sin, and is amalgamated with all that therein is. He sports at morning among the flowers of the field, unmindful that they shall fade and perish in the evening, and that the place thereof shall know them no more. He revels in the bright Summer sunset,—in the warm noonday of Autumn,—without anticipating the approach of Winter. He leaps up joyously into the arms of venerable old age, without glancing onwards towards the almost certainty, that that grey head must be laid in the dust, ere his own bright ringlets cluster with darker shade over a manly forehead.

There is in childhood a holy ignorance, a beautiful credulity, a peculiar sanctity, that one cannot contemplate without something of the reverential feeling with which one should approach beings of a celestial nature. The impress of the divine nature is, as it were, fresh on the infant spirit,—fresh and

unsullied by contact with this withering world. One trembles lest an impure breath should dim the clearness of its bright mirror. And how perpetually must those, who are in the habit of contemplating childhood—of studying the characters of little children, feel, and repeat to their own hearts, "Of such is the kingdom of Heaven!" Ay, which of us, of the wisest amongst us, may not stoop to receive instruction and rebuke from the example of a little child?

Which of us, by comparison with its sublime simplicity, its adorable ingenuousness, has not reason to blush for the littleness,—the insincerity,—the worldliness,—the degeneracy of his own? How often has the innocent remark, the artless question, the natural acuteness of a child, called up into older cheeks a blush of accusing consciousness!

How often might the prompt, candid, unqualifying, honourable decision of an infant, in some question of right or wrong, shame the hesitating, calculating evasiveness of mature reason! "Why do you say so, if it is not true?"—"You must not keep that, for it is not yours."—"If I do this, or that, it will make God angry," are remarks I have heard

from the lips of "babes and sucklings;" the first in particular, that probing question, to the no small embarrassment of some who *should* have been *their teachers!*

When sick and weary in heart and spirit of this world's pomps and vanities,—its fatiguing glare,—its feverish excitement,—its treacherous hollowness,—its vapid pleasures and artificial tastes,—how refreshing it is to flee back in thought to the time when, with the most exquisite capability of enjoyment, we were satisfied with the most simple objects of interest! It is incomprehensible to me how any after-scenes can ever efface the impression of those early pleasures. For my own part, I am not ashamed to repeat, that some of the happiest moments of my present existence are those, when some trifling incident calls up former thoughts and feelings, renewing as it were within me the heart of a child. Surely many there are must feel with me,—must enjoy at times this renovation of the spirit in its early freshness! *They* (to them alone I address myself) will comprehend the thrilling recollections with which, in my saunter round the garden, I stop

to contemplate the little patch of ground, once my exclusive property, where flowers and weeds, vegetables and young timber trees, were crammed in together with covetous industry and zeal, all improvident of the future. *They* will understand, why the fairest flowers of the garden or the greenhouse are often discarded from my hand or my bosom, to make way for a wild rose, a harebell, or a field orcas,—treasures accessible to me, of which I might at pleasure rifle the hedges and the meadows, when the cultured darlings of Flora were forbidden sweets, or sparingly yielded, and carefully gathered *for me*, a restriction fatally diminishing in my eyes the value of their coveted beauties. *They* will understand, (how pleasant it is to feel one's self understood, and alas, how rare!) why, to this day, my eye watches with tender interest, my ear drinks in with pleased attention, the familiar approach, the abrupt song of the domestic Robin,—not only because he is the acknowledged friend of man, and a sweet warbler when the general voice of song has ceased amongst our groves,—but because the time has been, when I looked upon the eloquent-eyed bird with a tender

veneration almost awful, firmly believing, as I believed in my own existence, every syllable of that pathetic history, "the Babes in the Wood." How the false guardian, the unnatural uncle, having decoyed those pretty innocent creatures into the depths of the dark forest, left them, without food, to perish there; and how they wandered about for many, many days, living on hips, and haws, and wild bramble-berries, (delicious food, I thought, if one could have had enough!)—till at last, growing weak and weary, their poor feet pricked and bleeding with thorns, and their tender limbs bruised and torn amongst the bushes, they laid themselves down at the foot of an old mossy oak,—their little arms about each other's neck—their soft cheeks pressed close together,—and so fell asleep, and never woke again, but lay there day after day, stiff and cold, two little pale corses; and how Robin Redbreast—pious Robin Redbreast!—hopped about them, and watched them sorrowfully, with his large dark eyes "of human meaning;" and how he brought dry leaves in his bill, one by one, and strewed them so thickly as to cover up from sight at last the faces and forms of

the dead children.—There must be who have believed as I believed; who have wept as I wept, at the relation of that mournful history. They will, perhaps, also remember, as I do, to have held in their hands the pretty speckled insect, the Lady Bird, and to have addressed to it, as it prepared to fly, the half sportive, half serious warning, "Lady Bird, Lady Bird! fly away home; your house is on fire, your children will burn!"—But possibly even *they* will laugh at my confession, that I had a sort of vague, mysterious idea of some *real* meaning (intelligible to the beautiful insect) being couched in my metrical warning! And they will laugh still more unrestrainedly when I avow, that I have often shuddered, with superstitious horror, when the nurse-maid, on seeing me pull the small heart-shaped pods of the white chickweed, has startled me with the vulgar saying, "Ah, naughty child! you've plucked your mother's heart out!"

Be it as it may;—I still, even to this hour, connect with those trivial things—those nursery tales—those senseless sayings—the recollection of mental impressions so vivid, so delicious, and occasionally

so painful, yet secretly and intently dwelt on, with a strange kind of infatuation,—especially those feelings of enthusiastic affection to particular individuals I was far too shy to express in half their glowing warmth,—and those vague, dreamy, superstitious reveries, and awfully delightful terrors, that always made me court solitude and darkness, though the sound of a falling leaf, or a nibbling mouse, would at such times set my heart beating audibly, and, in the stillness and blackness of night, my very breathing would seem impeded, and I have closed my eyelids, and kept them fast shut for hours, fearing to encounter the sight of some grisly phantom; then opened them in sudden desperation, and in the expectation of seeing—I knew not what. I still, even to this hour, at sight of many insignificant objects, recall to mind so vividly what were formerly my feelings associated with such, that the intermediate space between past and present seems in a manner annihilated, and I forget my actual self in the little happy being, whose heart and fancy luxuriated in a world of beauty and happiness, such as

the most inspired dream of poet or philosopher has never yet pourtrayed.

The world of a child's imagination is the creation of a far holier spell than hath been ever wrought by the pride of learning, or the inspiration of poetic fancy. Innocence, that thinketh no evil; ignorance, that apprehendeth none; hope, that hath experienced no blight; love, that suspecteth no guile. These are its ministering angels!—these wield a wand of power, making this earth a paradise!—Time, hard, rigid teacher!—Reality, rough, stern reality!—World, cold, heartless world!—that ever your sad experience, your sombre truths, your killing cold, your withering sneers, should scare those gentle spirits from their holy temple!—And wherewith do ye replace them? With caution, that repulseth confidence; with doubt, that repelleth love; with reason, that dispelleth illusion; with fear, that poisoneth enjoyment; in a word, with knowledge,—that fatal fruit, the tasting whereof, at the first onset, cost us Paradise!

And the tree of knowledge,—transplanted to this barren soil, together with its scanty blossoms,—doth

it not bring forth thorns abundantly? And of the fruits that ripen,—have any yet ripened to perfection?—what hand hath ever plucked unscathed?

Blessed be He who hath placed within our reach that other tree, once guarded by the flaming sword of the cherubim, (now no longer forbidden,) whereof, whoever hungereth, may taste and live!'

"IT IS NOT DEATH."

It is not Death—it is not Death,
From which I shrink with coward fear;
It is, that I must leave behind
All I love here.

It is not Wealth—it is not Wealth,
That I am loth to leave behind;
Small store to me (yet all I crave)
Hath fate assign'd.

It is not Fame—it is not Fame,
From which it will be pain to part;
Obscure my lot,—but mine was still
An humble heart.

It is not Health—it is not Health,
That makes me fain to linger here;
For I have languish'd on in pain
This many a year.

It is not Hope—it is not Hope,
From which I cannot turn away;
Oh, earthly Hope hath cheated me
This many a day.

But there are Friends—but there are Friends,
To whom I could not say, " Farewell !"
Without a pang more hard to bear
Than tongue can tell.

But there's a thought—but there's a thought,
Will arm me with that pang to cope;
Thank God! we shall not part like those
Who have no hope.

And some are gone—and some are gone,—
Methinks they chide my long delay,—
With whom, it seem'd, my very life
Went half away.

But we shall meet—but we shall meet,
Where parting tears shall never flow;
And, when I think thereon, almost
I long to go.

The Saviour wept—the Saviour wept
O'er him he loved—corrupting clay!—
But then He spake the word, and Death
Gave up his prey!—

A little while—a little while,
And the dark Grave shall yield its trust;
Yea, render every atom up
Of human dust.

What matters then—what matters then
Who earliest lays him down to rest?—
Nay, " to depart, and be with Christ,"
Is surely best.

OF THE
BOMBAY
BRANCH
OF TH
ROYAL ASIAT

SONNET.

TRAVELLER of Life! what plant of virtues rare
Seeketh thy curious eye? 'Mongst earth's excess,
Will none but the exotic, Happiness,
Content thine eager longing? Fruitless care!
It groweth not beneath our clouded skies.
But when amongst the groves of Paradise
The soft winds wanton, haply they may bear,
From thence to earth, some vagrant flower or leaf,
Some fluttering petal, exquisite as brief
Its od'rous beauty!—Oh, if to thy share
It fall, one blossom on thy path to find,—
Quick! snatch it to thine heart, ere the rough wind
Despoil its freshness. It will fade e'en there;
Thou can'st not quite exclude this cold world's nipping air.

THE LADYE'S BRYDALLE.

"Come hither, come hither, my little foot-page!
And beare to my gaye Ladye
This ringe of the good red gowde, and be sure
Rede well what she tellethe thee.

"And take tent, little Page, if mye Ladye's cheeke
Be with watchinge and weepinge pale;
If her locks are unkempt, and her bonnie eyes redde:
And come backe and telle me thye tale.

"And marke, little Page, when thou showest the ringe
If she snatchethe it hastelye,
If the red blude mount up her slendere throate
To her forehedde of ivorye.

" And take good heede, if, for gladnesse or griefe,
So chaungethe mye Ladye's cheere,
You shalle know bye her eyes, if their lichte laugh oute
Through the miste of a startinge teare.

(" Like the Summer sunne thro' a morninge cloude,)
There needethe no furthere tokenne,
That mye Ladye brighte, to her owne true Knighte,
Hath keepit her faithe unbrokenne.

" Now ride, little Page! for the sun peeres oute
Owre the rimme of the eastern heavenne,
And backe thou must bee, with thy tidinges to mee,
Ere the shadowe falles far at evenne."—

Awaye, and awaye! and he's farre on his waye
The little foot-page abreddye;
For he's backed on his Lordes owne gallante graye,
That steede so swift and steddye.

But the knighte stands there like a charmedde manne,
Watchinge with eare and eye,
The clatteringe speede of his noble steede,
That swifte as the windes doth flye.

But the windes and the lichtninges are loitererres alle
To the glaunce of a luver's mynde,
And Sir Alwynne, I trow, had thocht Bonnybelle slowe,
Had her fleetnesse outstrippit the wynde.

Beseemed to him, that the sunne once more
Had stayedde his course that daye;
Never sicke manne longed for morninge licht,
As Sir Alwynne for eveninge graye.

But the longeste daye must ende at laste,
And the brighteste sun must sette;
Where stayde Sir Alwynne at peepe of dawne,
There at even he stayethe him yette.

And he spyethe at laste—"Not soe, not soe,
'Tis a small graye cloude, Sir Knighte,
That risethe up like a courser's hedde
On that borderre of gowden licht."

"Bot harke! bot harke! for I heare it nowe,
'Tis the comynge of Bonnybelle!"
"Not soe, Sir Knighte! from that rockye height,
'Twas a clatteringe stone that felle."

" That slothfulle boye! but I'll thinke no more
Of him and that lagginge jade to-daye."
" Righte, righte, Sir Knighte!"—" Nay, now by this lichte,
Here comethe my Page, and my gallante graye!"

" Howe nowe, little Page! ere thou lichteste downe,
Speake but one worde oute hastylye;
Little Page! hast thou seene mye Ladye luve?
Hathe mye Ladye keepit her faithe with me?"

" I've seene thye Ladye luve, Sir Knighte,
And welle hathe she keepit her faithe with thee."
" Lichte downe, lichte downe, mye trustye Page!
A berrye browne barbe shall thy guerdon be.

" Telle on, telle on—Was mye Ladye's cheeke
Pale as the lilye, or rosye redde?
Did she put the ringe on her finger smalle?
And what was the very firste worde she sedde?"

" Pale was thye Ladye's cheeke, Sir Knighte!
Blent with no streake of the rosye redde;

I put the ringe on her finger smalle,
But there is no voice amongste the dedde."

* * * * * * *

There are torches hurryinge to and froe
In Raeburne Towerre to-nighte;
And the chapelle dothe glowe with lampes alsoe,
As if for a brydalle ryte.

But where is the Bride? and the Bridegroome where?
And where is the holye prieste?
And where are the guestes that shoulde biddenne be,
To partake of the marriage feaste?

The Bryde from her chamberre descendethe slowe,
And the Brydegroome her hande hath ta'en;
And the guestes are mette, and the holy Prieste
Precedethe the marriage traine.

The Bryde is the fayre Maude Winstanlye,
And Dethe her sterne Brydegroome;
And her father followes his onlye childe
To her mothere's yawninge tombe.

An agedde manne! and a wofulle manne!
And a heavye moane makes he;
"Mye childe! mye childe! mine onlye childe!
Would God I had dyedde for thee!"

An agedde manne, those white haires telle,
And that bendedde backe and knee;
Yette a stalwart Knighte, at Tewkesburye fighte,
Was Sir Archibalde Winstanlye!

'Tis a movinge thinge to see the teares
Wrunge oute frae an agedde eye,
Seldome and slowe, like the scantye droppes
Of a fountain that's neere a drye.

'Tis a sorrye sighte to see graye haires
Brocht downe to the grave with sorrowe!
Youthe lukes thro' the cloude of the presente daye
For a goldenne gleame to-morrowe.

Bot the palsyede hedde, and the feeble knees,
Berefte of earthlye staye! . . . . .
God help thee nowe, olde Winstanlye!
Gude Christians for thee praye!—

Bot manye a voice in that burialle traine
Breathes gloomilye aparte,
" Thou hadst not been childelesse nowe, olde manne,
Bot for thine owne harde hearte!"

And manye a mayde, who strewethe floweres
Afore the Ladye's biere,
Weepes oute, " Thou hadst not dyede, sweete Maude,
If Alwynne had beene heere!"

* * * * * * *

What solemne chaunte ascendeth slowe?
What voices peale the straine?
The Monkes of St Switholm's Abbaye neare
Have mette the funeralle traine.

They hold their landes, full manye a roode,
From the Knightes of Raeburne Towerre;
And everre when Dethe doth claime his preye,
From within that lordlye bowerre,

Then come the holye Fatheris forthe,
The shrowdedde corse to meete,
And see it laide in hallowde grave,
With requiem sadde and sweete.

And nowe they turne, and leade the waye
To that laste home so nigh,
Where alle the race of Winstanlye
In dust and darknesse lye.

The holye altarre blazethe brighte
With waxenne taperres high;
Elsewhere, in dimme and doubtfulle lycht
Dothe alle the chapelle lye.

Huge, undefinedde shadowes falle
From pillare, and from tombe;
And manye a grimme olde monumente
Lookes ghastelye through the gloome.

And manye a rustye shirt of maile
The eye maye scantlye trace;
And crestedde helmette, blacke and barred,
That grinnes with sterne grimace.

Bannerre and scutcheon from the walles
Wave in the cald nighte aire;
Gleames oute their gorgeous heraldrye
In the ent'ringe torches glare.

For nowe the mourninge cumpanye,
Beneathe that archedde doore,
Beare in the lovelye, lifelesse claye,
Shall passe thereoute no more.

And up the soundinge aisle ye stille
Their solemne chaunte may heare;
Tille 'neath that blazonned catafalque
They gentlye reste the biere:

Then ceasethe everye sounde of life.
So deepe that awefulle hushe,
Ye heare from yon freshe openneddе vaulte
The hollowe deathe-winde rushe.

Backe from the biere the mournerres alle
Retire a little space;
Alle bot that olde bereavedde manne,
Who takethe there his place

Beside the dedde:—but none may see
The workinges of his mynde;
So lowe upon that sunkenne breste
Is that graye-hedde declin'de.

* * * * * * *

The masse is saide, they raise the dedde,
The palle is flunge aside;
And soone that coffinn'd lovelyenesse
The darksome pit shalle hide.

It gapethe close at hande.—Deep downe
Ye maye the coffinnes see,
(By the lampes dull glare, freshe kindledde there,)
Of manye a Winstanlye.

And the gildedde nails on one looke brighte,
And the velvette of cramoisie;
She hathe not laine there, a calenderre yeere,
The laste Dame Winstanlye.

" There's roome for thee heere, oh daughter deere!"
Methinkes I heare her saye;—
" There's roome for thee, Maude Winstanlye;
Come downe—make no delaye!"—

And, from the vaulte, two grimlye armes
Upraised, demaunde the dedde! . . . .
Hark! hark! 'tis the tramp of a rushinge steede!
'Tis the clanke of an armedde tredde!

There's an armedde hedde at the chapelle doore;
And in armoure all bedighte
In coal-black steele, from hedde to heele,
In steppes an armedde knighte!

And uppe the aisle, with heavye tredde,
Alone advauncethe he;
To barre his waye, dothe none essaye,
Of the fun'ralle companye.

And never a voice amongstc them alle
Dothe aske who he mote be;
Nor why his armedde steppe disturbes
That sadde solemnitye.

Yette manye an eye, with fixedde stare,
Dothe sternelye on him frowne;
Bot none may trace the straunger's face—
He weares his vizorre downe.

He speakes no worde, bot waves his hande,
And straighte theye alle obeye;
And ev'rye soule that standethe there,
Falles backe to make him waye.

He passethe on—no hande dothe stirre—
His steppe the onlye sounde—
He passethe on—and signes them sette
The coffinne on the grounde.

A momente gazinge downe thereonne,
With foldedde armes dothe staye;
Then stoopinge, with one mightye wrench
He teares the lidde awaye.

Then risethe a confusedde sounde,
And some half forwarde starte,
And murmurre "sacriledge!" And some
Beare hastilye aparte.

The agedde Knighte, at that straunge sighte
Whose consciousnesse hathe fledde—
Bot signe, nor sounde disturbethe him
Who gazethe on the dedde.

And seemethe sune, as that faire face
Dothe alle exposedde lye,
As if its holye calme o'erspredde
The frowninge faces bye.

And nowe beside the Virginne corse,
Downe kneeles the straunger Knighte,
And backe his vizorrede helme he throwes,
Bot not in openne sighte;

For to the pale, cold clammye face,
His owne he stoopethe lowe,
And kissethe firste the bludelesse cheeke,
And then the marble browe.

Then, to the dedde lippes gluede, so longe
The livinge lippes do staye,
As if in that sad silente kisse,
The soule had paste awaye.

Bot suddenne, from that mortal trance,
As with a desp'rate straine,
Up! up! he springes—His armoure ringes!
His vizorre's downe againe.

With manye a flouerre, her weepinge maydes
The Ladye's shroude have dressed—
And one white rose is in the faulde
That veiles her whiterre breste.

One gowden ringlette on her browe
(Escapedde forthe) dothe straye—
So on a wreathe of driftedde snowe,
The wintrye sun-beames playe.

The mailedde hande hath ta'en the rose
From offe that breste so fayre—
The faulchion's edge, from that pale hedde,
Hath shorne the gowden haire.

One heavye sigh!—the firste, and laste—
One deepe and stifledde groane!
A few longe strides—a clange of hoofes,
And the armedde straunger's gone!

SONNET.—1818.

DARK rolling clouds, in wild confusion driven,
Obscure the full-orb'd Moon. In all the Heaven
One only star (th' appointed evening light)
Beams mildly forth; like friendly Pharos bright,
That, kindled on some towering summit, streams
Wide o'er the ocean paths. Its far-off beams
First seen by him who on the silent deck
Paces his lonely watch—a glimmering speck,
Doubtful in distance. But his homeward eye
Is keen the faithful beacon to descry,
And mine like his, impatient to explore
(With friends and kindred throng'd) the distant shore,
Is fixed on that lone star, whose lovely ray
Points to a happier home, the heavenward way.

ABJURATION.

THERE was a time—sweet time of youthful folly!
Fantastic woes I courted, feign'd distress,
Wooing the veiled phantom Melancholy
With passion, born, like Love, " in idleness."

And like a lover—like a jealous lover,
I hid mine idol with a miser's art,
Lest vulgar eyes her sweetness should discover,
Close in the inmost chambers of mine heart—

And then I sought her—oft in secret sought her,
From merry mates withdrawn and mirthful play,
To wear away, by some deep stilly water
In greenwood haunt, the livelong summer day—

Watching the flitting clouds, the fading flowers,
The flying rack athwart the waving grass—
And murmuring oft—"Alack! this life of ours!—
Such are its joys—so swiftly doth it pass!"

And then mine idle tears (ah, silly maiden!)
Bedropt the liquid grass like summer rain,
And sighs, as from a bosom sorrow-laden,
Heaved the light heart, that knew no real pain.

And then I loved to haunt lone burial places,
To pace the church-yard earth with noiseless tread,
To pore in new-made graves for ghastly traces—
Brown crumbling bones of the forgotten dead.

To think of passing bells, of death and dying—
'Twere good, methought, in early youth to die,
So loved! lamented!—in such sweet sleep lying,
The white shroud, all with flowers and rosemary

Stuck o'er by loving hands!—But then, 'twould grieve me
Too sore, forsooth! the scene my fancy drew—
I could not bear the thought to die and leave ye,
And I have lived, dear friends! to weep for you.

And I have lived to prove what "fading flowers"
Are life's best joys, and all we love and prize—
What chilling rains succeed the summer showers!
What bitter drops wrung slow from elder eyes!

And I have lived to look on "death and dying,"
To count the sinking pulse—the short'ning breath—
To watch the last faint life-streak flying—flying—
To stoop—to start! to be alone with death!

And I have lived to feign the smile of gladness,
When all within was cheerless, dark, and cold—
When all earth's joys seemed mockery and madness,
And life more tedious than "a tale twice told."

And now—and now—pale pining Melancholy!
No longer veil'd for me your haggard brow
In pens'ive sweetness, such as youthful folly
Fondly conceited; I abjure ye now!—

Away! avaunt!—No longer now I call ye,
"Divinest Melancholy! mild, meek maid!"
No longer may your syren spells enthrall me,
A willing captive in your baleful shade.

" Give me the voice of mirth, the sound of laughter,
The sparkling glance of pleasure's roving eye!—
The past is past—avaunt, thou dark hereafter!—
Come, eat and drink—to-morrow we must die!"

So in his desperate mood the fool hath spoken—
The fool, whose heart hath said " There is no God."
But for the stricken soul—the spirit broken,
There's balm in Gilead still—The very rod,

If we but kiss it as the stroke descendeth,
Distilleth oil t' allay the inflicted smart,
And " Peace that passeth understanding" bleudeth
With the deep sighing of the contrite heart.

Mine be that holy, humble tribulation—
No longer " feign'd distress, fantastic woe;"
I know my griefs—but then my consolation,
My trust, and my immortal hopes I know.

SONNET.—1821.

Stay, flaming chariot! fiery coursers, stay,
Soft gleams of setting sunshine, that doth cast
A lustrous line, along the dark wide waste!
Oh! wherefore must ye fade so swift away?
Wherefore, oh! wherefore at the close of day
Shine out so glorious, when Night's sable pall
Will drop around so soon, and cover all?
Beautiful beam! bright trav'ler! stay, oh! stay,
And let my spirit on your parting ray
Glide from this world of error, doubt, distress—
(Oh! I am weary of its emptiness,)
To happier worlds, where there is peace for aye,
Peace! less abiding here, than Noah's dove—
When we shall never part from those we love!

BEAUTY.

"Quel dommage que tout cela pourrira!"
"Oui, Monsieur! mais cela n'est pas pourri."

JOHN BULL and Lord Byron are agreed on one point. Both assert "Cant" to be the prevailing moral feature of the age we live in. Innumerable scribblers have caught up the same note, and spun it out in endless variation, and I, among the small fry of literature, am fain to join in the chorus. Of all cants then, one of the most sickening to my taste is that of some parents who pretend (I give them little credit for sincerity) to deprecate for their female offspring that precious gift, as it *really is*, or, as they are pleased to term it, "that dangerous distinction," personal beauty. They affect, forsooth, to

thank Providence that their daughters are "no beauties," or to sigh and lament over their fatal attractions: and then they run out into a long string of trite axioms, and stale common-places, about the snares and vanities of this wicked world, as if none but beauties were exposed to the assaults of the Tempter. Now I am firmly of opinion, nay, every day experience proves it is so, that ugly women, called plain by courtesy, are just as liable to slip and stumble in those treacherous pitfalls, as others of their sex distinguished by personal attractiveness; and, on a fair average, that pretty women are the happiest, as well as the most agreeable, of the species.

Let us take a fair sample of this genera—not a *perfect* specimen; the botanist may select such a one for his herbal, but it would not so well answer our purpose in exemplifying human varieties. Let us suppose a child endowed with moderate abilities, an amiable disposition, and a decent share of beauty, and other children of the same family gifted in an equal proportion with mental qualifications, but wholly destitute of external charms, will not the fair attractive child be the most favoured, the best be-

loved, generally speaking, even of those parents who endeavour to be, and honestly believe that they are, most conscientiously impartial? The same anxious cares may, it is true, be equally bestowed upon all—the same tender and endearing epithets be applied to all—but the eye will linger longest on the sweet countenance of the lovely little one, the parental kiss will dwell more fondly on its rosy lip, and the voice, in speaking to it, will be involuntarily modulated to softer and more tender tones. I am not arguing that this preference, however involuntary it may be, is even then wholly defensible, or that, if knowingly, weakly yielded to, it is not in the highest degree cruel and inexcusable. I only assert, that it is in human nature; and waiving that side of the question, which, if analyzed, would involve a long moral discussion not *necessarily* connected with the present subject, I would simply observe, that if this unconscious, irresistible preference frequently influences even the fondest parents, how far more unrestrainedly does it manifest itself in the circle of friends, guests, relations, and casual visitors! How many indulgences and gratifications are obtained for

the irresistible pleader! How many petitions granted for the remuneration of a kiss! How tenderly are the tears of contrition wiped away from eyes that look so beautifully remorseful! And all this, I firmly believe, if restrained by right feeling and firm principle from reaching a blameable excess, is productive of good results only in the young mind, and that children thus happily constituted, thrive best (even in a moral sense) in that atmosphere of tender indulgence, and become eventually more amiable and equable, least selfish and exacting, in all the various circumstances and relations of life.

The reason of this I take to be, that they feel the most perfect confidence in the good-will and affections of their fellow-creatures; and how many of the best affections of our nature, spring up and flourish, under the kindly influence of that most Christian feeling! The fair engaging girl expands into womanhood, in the warm sunshine of affectionate encouragement, and all the delicate and grateful feelings of her heart are drawn out to bud and blossom in that congenial clime,—every individual of her family and friends fondly or courteously contributing to

her happiness or pleasure—will not the desire to repay kindness with kindness, love with love, blessing with blessing, be the responsive impulse of her young heart? She finds by everyday experience, that the tenderest approbation, the warmest encomiums, the fondest caresses, reward her endeavours after the attainment of useful information and elegant accomplishment, and that blessings more expressively silent (the eloquent blessings of the eye) beam unutterable things on her performance of higher duties. What a powerful stimulus to persevere in the path of well-doing! to strive to be all she is thought capable of being! Her natural failings, and youthful errors, are most mildly and tenderly rebuked, her motives most charitably interpreted. What incentives to conquer those failings! to avoid those errors! to justify indulgence so tender! to realize hopes so sanguine! Happiness is far less selfish than sorrow. Its natural tendency (that is of happiness derived from pure and holy sources—the only true happiness in short) is to communicate, to infuse itself as it were into every surrounding object, and of a surety nothing inspires us with such good-will and charity towards

our fellow-creatures, as the pleasant consciousness that they are benevolently disposed towards us. If all the discourteous, uncharitable, ill-natured things that are said and done, were traced back to their real source, it would be found that at least every other one resulted, not from resentment for the infliction of serious injury, but from some wounded feeling—some smarting sense of neglect, unkindness, disrespect, or, it may be, of conscious insignificance and deficiency in the power of pleasing, a consciousness, by the way, widely differing from Christian humility, and operating far otherwise (generally speaking) on the heart and temper.

Allowing these to be fancied, or at least fancifully exaggerated, injuries, their influence on the character is not therefore less pernicious; and the question is, Would these baleful, corroding, crushing thoughts, have sprung up in the cheering sunshine of favour and indulgence? Have they not been generated and fostered in a cold ungenial shade, where "flowers that love the light" could never blossom?

But "Vanity! vanity!" saith the preacher.—What sevenfold shield can fence the heart of wo-

man against vanity and its satanic legion? The *only* shield, I reply, of proof to repel from any human heart the perpetual, insidious, and ever-varying assaults of the Tempter—sound moral principles, founded on religious knowledge, and a firm and humble faith in the truths of revelation. When these have not been early and sedulously inculcated, the Beauty is exposed indeed to imminent and peculiar dangers.

But is the ugly woman, on her part, more secure from those temptations to which she also is peculiarly exposed? Is vanity solely confined to the consciousness of personal attractions? Is there no such thing as conceit of sense, of talent, of taste, of cleverness, (that is the fashionable word,) of goodness, nay, even of humility? There is also (if I may so express myself) conceit active, and conceit passive. That which plumes itself on *being* superior on such and such points, is to my taste less odious than the pharisaical cant—"Well, thank God! I am not so and so."

Now verily I am inclined to believe, that of all modifications of this infirmity—this *vice*, if you will

have it so—*that* is most harmless which plumes itself on outward and visible perfections, (I speak with exclusive reference to *female beauties,*) and, in point of fact, have we not often occasion to remark, that a pretty, vain, giddy girl, one of the most apparently inconsiderate character, will settle down for life, with a companion who deserves and possesses her respect and affection, into a domestic, prudent wife, a careful and tender mother, an exemplary mistress of a family; while some grave, demure-looking miss, guarded at all points in the armour of ugliness, bristling all over with decorum, and pinched into the very pattern of primness and propriety, doth as often (if occasion offer) launch out into such extravagancies and indiscretions, as defy all calculation on probability and liability, and utterly confound the wise theories of all declaimers against the dangerous endowment of Beauty.

But to sum up all, are there in the class of Beauties fewer good wives, good mothers, good women, and good Christians, than amongst those of the sex to whom nature has been sparing of outward adornments? An impartial observer will acknowledge,

that such characters are found in pretty equal proportions amongst the lovely and unlovely. But reverting from that higher ground of observation to minor considerations, I will venture to assert, that there is less vanity, or perhaps, more correctly speaking, less solicitude about personal appearance, in pretty than in plain women. The cause is obvious—one is perpetually striving to make herself what nature has made the other. Its frequent result is more perplexing. That exuberant self-complacency, with which an ugly woman, in the full pomp and panoply of dress and decoration, seems as it were to inflate and expand her whole person; and if some solitary charm of form or feature had been grudgingly bestowed upon her, what sedulous anxiety to exhibit it to the best advantage! How the malady concentrates itself in a manner in that particular part! Betrays itself by an unnatural and perpetual distension of the mouth, if a set of white and even teeth is the seat of the disorder; is distinguished by a delicate curve of the fingers, or a remarkable action of the hand, if that happens to be the part affected; or by a frequent protrusion of the foot, should the disease have possessed itself of the lower extremities.

Good Heaven! in what thing, in what place, under what circumstances, will not vanity take root and thrive? Stick it, like houseleek, on a bare wall, its fibres will insinuate themselves into the crevices, and the plant will prosper *somehow*. Strew it, like mustard and cress, over a few woollen threads, in an earthen platter, and you may pick sallad tomorrow. Hang it up, like the air plant, between heaven and earth, by a single thread, and like the air plant, it will bud and blossom, without other than etherial nutriment. They are inexperienced naturalists who affirm that it flourishes only, or peculiarly, in soil or climate of such and such nature and temperature.

But to all who persist in the belief that Beauty is the forcing bed of this idle flaunting weed—to all parents who are really sincere in deprecating for their female offspring, what *they* are pleased to term, so fatal an endowment—I would compassionately suggest one simple expedient, calculated to strike at the very root of the evil. Let the pride of civilization condescend for once to adopt the practice of those unsophisticated savages, who (for very oppo-

site purposes, indeed) flatten the noses, depress the skulls, and slit the lips and ears of their new-born females. The most obstinate charms—the most inveterate beauty—must infallibly yield to this early discipline; to which, as a measure of further security, may be added the Chinese precaution of compressing the feet, and a general tattooing of the whole person, so that no separate part or portion thereof, may become a lurking strong-hold for that subtle demon, who can entrench himself in the hem of an ear, or "take his stand" on the tip of a little finger.

Results incalculably important, powerfully influential on the whole system of society, might arise from a skilful and determined practice of these precautionary measures. We learn from natural history, and daily observation confirms it to us, that human science and ingenuity, sometimes dexterously availing themselves of chance occasions, often obtain signal triumphs over the stubborn laws of nature. In America (I think) a breed of sheep has been propagated, (springing, in the first instance, from an accidental variety,) so crippled in the hind-legs, that the

slightest fence imaginable,—a mere ridge of turf,—is sufficient to restrain the animals within the boundaries of their rich pastures, where they crawl about like monstrous grubs, the qualities of the wool and mutton being noways deteriorated by their disproportionate formation. Why should not similar modes of treatment (if brought to bear on the human species) be rewarded by similar success? The Chinese, in particular, (were it possible that the light of science should penetrate those dark mists of ignorance and obstinacy which envelope "the celestial empire,") instead of torturing, with barbarous pressure, the tender feet of their infant daughters, might happily obtain and cultivate a breed of females, as incapable of active locomotion as the woolly crawlers above mentioned; or, if that degree of perambulatory power should be deemed incompatible with the moral security of the female flock, doubtless the triumph of experimental philosophy might be carried still farther, in the ultimate perfecting of a species wholly divested of legs and feet; very useless appendages, it must be owned, when the possessors are predestined to squat on cushions and carpets throughout the whole term of

their mortal existence. In Barbary and Turkey also, and amongst all those nations where female beauty is secluded from the public eye, and valued by the hundred-weight, the attainment of so valuable and curious a variety would be an object of infinite importance; but these are desultory considerations, thrown out at random, from whence the patriotic mind reverts, with concentrated zeal, to the dearer interests of its native land. To my countrymen, therefore—But whither tends my speculative genius?—what would be the probable result of those measures I have ventured to suggest, in my compassionate tenderness for parental society? If adopted by a few leaders of rank and fashion, the universal rage for novelty and imitation would soon make the practice general; and then, indeed, not alone a separate caste might be attained, sanctified in the beauty of ugliness, but a great and decided conquest over Beauty itself might be confidently anticipated. But with its utter extinction in the land, might not our present conceptions of its component parts, and general combinations, fade away to dim recollections? Those also, in process of time, could hardly fail to be wholly

obliterated ; and in their stead would grow up a new standard of perfection, not less the object of dangerous and profane worship, for being the very reverse of its present idol. With the customs of savage nations, we may import their tastes also ; and thenceforward, a celebrated beauty of the British court may be constituted such, by perfections similar to those that qualify a Hottentot Venus, an Esquimaux Petite Maitresse, or a reigning toast of the Sandwich Islands ; and the first glance of a flat nose, thick lips, flapping ears, and depressed pericranium, in his newborn babe, may strike into the heart of an anxious parent the same pious horror, with which he now contemplates the Grecian outline, and delicate proportions of the infant Beauty, who smiles in his face with such innocent and pitiable unconsciousness of the fatal charms with which nature has endowed her.

MY GARDEN.

I LOVE my Garden!—dearly love
That little spot of ground!—
There's not, methinks—(though I may err,
In partial pride)—a pleasanter,
In all the country round!—

The smooth green turf winds gently there,
With no ungraceful bend,
Round many a bed, and many a border,
Where, gaily group'd in sweet disorder,
Young Flora's darlings blend.

Spring! Summer! Autumn!—Of all three,
Whose reign is loveliest there?—
Oh! is not she who paints the ground,
When its frost fetters are unbound,
The fairest of the fair?

I gaze upon her violet beds,
Laburnams, golden tress'd;
Her flower-spiked almonds——Breathe perfume,
From lilac and seringa bloom,
And cry, "I love Spring best!"

But Summer comes, with all her pomp
Of fragrance, beauty, bliss!—
And from amidst her bowers of roses,
I sigh, as purple evening closes,
"What season equals this?"

That pageant passeth by.—Comes next
Brown Autumn in her turn;—
Oh! not unwelcome cometh she;
The parched earth luxuriously
Drinks from her dewy urn.

And she hath flowers, and fragrance too,
Peculiarly her own;
Asters of ev'ry hue—perfume,
Spiced rich with clematis and broom,
And mignonette late blown.

Then if some lingering rose I spy
Reclining languidly,
Or the bright laurel's glossy green,—
Dear Autumn! my whole heart, I ween,
Leaps up for love of thee!—

Oh, yes!—I love my garden well!
And find employment there;—
Employment sweet; for many an hour,
In tending every shrub and flower
With still unwearied care.

I prop the weakly,—prune the rude,—
Scatter the various seeds,—
Clear out intruders,—yet of *those*
Oft sparing, what the florist knows
To be but gaudy weeds.

But when my task—my pleasant task!—
Is ended for the day—
Sprinkled o'er every sun-bow'd flower
The artificial evening shower—
Then oftentimes I stray—

—(Inherent is the love of change
In human hearts)—far, far
Beyond the garden-gate,—the bound
That clips my little Eden round,—
Chance for my leading star;

Through hollow lanes, or coppice paths,
By hill or hawthorn fence,
O'er thymy commons, clover fields,
Where every step I take reveals
Some charm of sight or sense.

The winding path brings suddenly
A rustic bridge in sight;
Beneath it, gushing brightly out,
The rivulet, where speckled trout
Leap in the circling light.

Pale water-lilies float thereon,
The Naiads' loveliest wreath!
The adders' tongues dip down to drink;
The flag peers high above the brink,
From her long slender sheath.

There, on the greensward, an old oak
Stands singly.—One, I trow,
Whose mighty shadow spread as wide
When they were in their prime, who died
An hundred years ago.

A single ewe, with her twin lambs,
Stands the grey trunk beside;
Others lie clustering in the shade,
Or down the windings of the glade
Are scatter'd far and wide.

Two mossy thorns, o'er yonder stile
A bowery archway rise;—
Oh, what a flood of fragrance thence
Breathes out!—Behind that hazel fence
A flowering bean-field lies.

The shadowy path winds gently on
That hazel fence beneath;
The wild rose, and the woodbine there
Shoot up, festooning high in air
Their oft-entangled wreath.

The path winds on—on either side
Wall'd in by hedges high;
Their boughs so thickly arching over,
That scarce one speck you can discover—
One speck of the blue sky!—

A lovely gloom!—It pleaseth me,
And lonely Philomel.—
Hark! the enchantress sings!—that strain
Dies with a tremulous fall!—again—
Oh, what a gushing swell!

Darker and darker still the road,
Scarce lit by twilight glances;—
Darker and darker still——But, see!
Yonder, on that young aspen tree
A darting sun-beam dances.

Another gems the bank below
With em'ralds!—Into one
They blend—unite——one em'rald sea!—
And, last, in all his majesty,
Breaks through the setting sun!

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And I am breathless, motionless,
Mute with delight and love!
My very being seems to blend
With all around me—To ascend
To the great Source above.

I feel I am a spark struck out
From an eternal flame;
A part of the stupendous whole,
His work, who breath'd a deathless soul
Into this mortal frame.

And *they* shall perish—all these things—
Darkness shall quench this ball.
Death-throes this solid earth shall rive,
Yet I, frail thing of dust! survive
The final wreck of all.

"Wake up my glory! Lute and harp!"
Be vocal ev'ry chord;
Lo! all His works in concert sing,
"Praise, praise to the Eternal King,"
The Universal Lord!

Oh, powerless will! Oh, languid voice!
Weak words! imperfect lays!
Yet, could His works alone inspire
The feelings that attune my lyre
To these faint notes of praise.

Not to the charms of tasteful art
That I am cold or dull;
I gaze on all the graceful scene,
The clust'ring flowers—the velvet green,
And cry,—"How beautiful!"

But when to Nature's book I turn,
The page *she* spreads abroad;
Tears only to mine eyes that steal,
Bear witness that I see and feel
The mighty hand of God!

AUTUMN FLOWERS.

Those few pale Autumn flowers!
How beautiful they are!
Than all that went before,
Than all the Summer store,
How lovelier far!

And why?—They are the *last*—
The last!—the last!—the last!—
O, by that little word,
How many thoughts are stirr'd!
That sister of the past!

Pale flowers!—Pale perishing flowers!
Ye're types of precious things;
Types of those bitter moments
That flit like life's enjoyments,
On rapid, rapid wings.

Last hours with parting dear ones,
(That time the fastest spends,)
Last tears, in silence shed,
Last words, half-uttered,
Last looks of dying friends!

Who but would fain compress
A life into a day;
The last day spent with one,
Who, e'er the morrow's sun,
Must leave us, and for aye?

O, precious, precious moments!
Pale flowers! ye're types of those—
The saddest! sweetest! dearest!
Because, like those, the nearest
Is an eternal close.

Pale flowers! Pale perishing flowers!
I woo your gentle breath·
I leave the summer rose
For younger, blither brows,
Tell me of change and death!

"SUFFICIENT UNTO THE DAY IS THE EVIL THEREOF."

Oh! by that gracious rule
Were we but wise to steer
On the wide Sea of Thought,
What moments, trouble-fraught,
Were spared us here!

But we (perverse and blind)
As covetous of pain,
Not only seek for more
Yet hidden, but live o'er
The past again.

This life is called brief—
Man on the earth but crawls
His threescore years and ten—
At best fourscore—and then
The ripe fruit falls.

Yet, betwixt birth and death,
Were but the life of man
By his *thoughts* measured,
To what an age would spread
That little span!

There are, who're born, and die,
Eat, sleep, walk, rest between—
Talk—*act* by clock-work too,
So pass, in order due,
Over the scene.

With whom the past *is past*,
The future, *nothing yet*;
And so, from day to day
They breathe, till call'd to pay
The last great debt.

Their life, in truth, *is* brief;
A speck—a point of time,
Whether in good old age
Endeth their pilgrimage,
Or in its prime.

But other some there are,
(I call them not more wise,)
In whom the restless mind
Still lingereth behind,
Or forward flies.

With *these*, things pass away;
But past things are not dead;
In the heart's treasury,
Deep-hidden, dead they lie,
Unwithered.

And there the soul retires,
From the dull things that are,
To mingle, oft and long,
With the time-hallowed throng
Of those that were.

Then into life start out
The scenes long vanished;
Then we behold again
The forms that have long lain
Among the dead.

We seek their grasp of love,
We meet their beaming eye;
We speak—the vision's flown,
Dissolving with its own
Intensity.

Years rapidly shift on,
(Like clouds athwart the sky,)
And, lo! sad watch we keep,
When, in perturbed sleep,
The sick doth lie.

We gaze on some pale face,
Shown by the dim watch-light;
Shuddering we gaze, and pray,
And weep—and wish away
The long, long night.

And yet minutest things,
That mark time's tedious tread,
Are on the feverish brain,
With self-protracting pain,
Deep minuted.

The drops, with trembling hand,
(Love steadied,) pour'd out;—
The draught replenished,—
The label, oft re-read
With nervous doubt.

The watch, that ticks so loud;
The winding it, for one
Whose hand lies powerless;—
And then, the fearful guess,—
"Ere *this* hath run...."

The shutter, half unclosed
As the night wears away;
Ere the last stars are set—
Pale stars!—that linger yet,
Till perfect day.

The morn, so oft invoked,
That bringeth no relief;
From which, with sickening sight,
We turn, as if its light
But mock'd our grief.

Oh, never, after-dawn,
For us the east shall streak;
But we shall see agen,
With the same thoughts as then,
That pale day-break!

The desolate awakening,
When first we feel alone!
"Dread memories" are these!—
Yet who, for heartless ease,
Would exchange one?

These are the soul's hid wealth—
Relics, embalm'd with tears.—
Or, if her curious eye
Searcheth futurity,—
The depth of years,—

There (from the deck of youth)
Enchanted land she sees;
Blue skies, and sun-bright bowers,
Reflected, and tall towers,
On glassy seas.

But heavy clouds collect
Over that bright-blue sky;
And rough winds rend the trees,
And lash those glassy seas
To billows high!

And then, the last thing seen
By that dim light, may be
(With helm and rudder lost)
A lone wreck, tempest-tost,
On the dark sea!—

Thus doth the soul extend
Her brief existence *here*,
Thus multiplieth she,
Yea, to infinity!)
The short career.

Presumptuous and unwise!
As if the present sum
Were little of life's woe!—
Why seeketh she to know
Ills yet to come?

Look up, look up, my soul,
To loftier mysteries;
Trust in His word to thee,
Who saith, "All tears shall be
Wiped from all eyes."

And when thou turnest back,
(Oh! what can chain thee *here?*)
Seek out the Isles of light,
On "Mem'ry's waste" yet bright;
Or if too near

To desolate plains they lie,
All dark with guilt and tears;
Still, still retrace the past,
Till thou alight at last
On life's first years.

There not a passing cloud
Obscures the sunny scene;
No blight on the young tree;
No thought of what *may be*,
Or what *hath been*.

There all is Hope—*not* hope—
For all things are possest.
No—bliss without alloy,
And innocence and joy,
In the young breast.

And all-confiding love,
And holy ignorance,
Thrice blessed veil! Soon torn
From eyes foredoom'd to mourn
For man's offence.

O, thither, weary spirit!
Flee from this world defiled.
How oft, heart-sick and sore,
I've wished I were once more
A little child!

GRACIOUS RAIN.

The east wind had whistled for many a day,
Sere and wintry, o'er summer's domain;
And the sun, muffled up in a dull robe of grey,
Look'd sullenly down on the plain.

The butterfly folded her wings as if dead,
Or awaked ere the full destined time;
Ev'ry flower shrank inward, or hung down its head
Like a young heart frost-nipp'd in its prime.

I, too, shrank and shiver'd, and eyed the cold earth,
The cold heaven with comfortless looks:
And I listen'd in vain for the summer birds' mirth,
And the music of rain-plenish'd brooks.

But lo! while I listen'd, down heavily dropt
A few tears from a low-sailing cloud;
Large and few they descended—then thicken'd—then stopt,
Then poured down abundant and loud.

O, the rapture of beauty, of sweetness, of sound,
That succeeded that soft gracious rain!
With laughter and singing the valleys rang round,
And the little hills shouted again.

The wind sunk away like a sleeping child's breath,
The pavilion of clouds was upfurl'd;
And the sun, like a spirit triumphant o'er death,
Smiled out on this beautiful world.

On this "*beautiful world*," such a change had been wrought
By these few blessed drops. Oh! the same
On some cold stony heart might be work'd too, methought,
Sunk in guilt, but not senseless of shame.

If a few virtuous tears by the merciful shed,
Touch'd its hardness, perhaps the good grain
That was sown there and rooted, though long *seeming* dead,
Might shoot up and flourish again.

And the smile of the virtuous, like sunshine from Heaven,
Might chase the dark clouds of despair;
And remorse, when the rock's flinty surface was riven,
Might gush out and soften all there.

Oh! to work such a change—By God's grace to recall
A poor soul from the death-sleep! To this!
To this joy that the angels partake, what were all
That the worldly and sensual call bliss!

THE WELCOME HOME,

1820.

HARK! hark! they're come!—those merry bells,
That peal, their joyous welcome swells;
And many hearts are swelling high,
With more than joy,—with ecstacy!

And many an eye is straining now
T'ward that good ship, that sails so slow;
And many a look toward the land
They cast, upon that deck who stand.

Flow, flow, ye tides!—ye languid gales,
Rise, rise, and fill their flagging sails!—
Ye tedious moments, fly, begone,
And speed the blissful meeting on.

Impatient watchers! happy ye,
Whose hope shall soon be certainty;
Happy, thrice happy! soon to strain
Fond hearts to kindred hearts again!—

Brothers and sisters,—children,—mother,—
All, all restored to one another!
All, all return'd!—And are there none
To *me* restor'd, return'd?—Not one.

Far other meeting *mine* must be
With friends long lost—Far other sea
Than thou, oh restless ocean! flows
Betwixt us—One that never knows

Ebb-time or flood;—a stagnant sea;—
Time's gulph;—its shore Eternity!—
No voyager from that shadowy bourne
With chart or sounding may return.

There, there *they* stand,—the loved!—the lost!
They beckon from that awful coast!—
They cannot thence return to me,
But I shall go to them.—I see

E'en now, methinks, those forms so dear,
Bend smiling to invite me there.—
Oh, best beloved! a little while,
And I obey that beck'ning smile!

'Tis all my comfort now, to know,
In God's good time, it shall be so;
And yet, in that sweet hope's despite,
Sad thoughts oppress my heart to-night.

And doth the sight of others' gladness
Oppress this selfish heart with sadness?
Now Heaven forbid!—But tears will rise—
Unbidden tears—into mine eyes.

When busy thought contrasts with theirs
My fate, my feelings—Four brief years
Have wing'd their flight, since, where they stand,
I stood, and watch'd that parting band,

(*Then* parting hence,) and *one*, methought,
(Oh, human foresight! set at nought
By God's unfathom'd will!) was borne
From England, never to return!—

With sadden'd heart, I turn'd to seek
Mine own beloved home,—to speak,
With her who shared it, of the fears
She also shared in . . . . . It appears

But yesterday that thus we spoke;
And I can see the very look
With which she said, " I do believe
Mine eyes have ta'en their last long leave

Of her who is gone hence to-day!"—
Five months succeeding slipp'd away;
And, on the sixth, a deep-toned bell
Swung slow, of recent death to tell!—

It toll'd for her, with whom so late
I reason'd of impending fate;
To me, those solemn words who spoke
So late, with that remember'd look!—

And *now*, from that same steeple, swells
A joyous peal of merry bells,
Her welcome, whose approaching doom
We blindly thought—a foreign tomb!

TO A DYING INFANT.

Sleep, little Baby! sleep!
Not in thy cradle bed,
Not on thy mother's breast
Henceforth shall be thy rest,
But with the quiet dead.

Yes, with the quiet dead,
Baby! thy rest shall be—
Oh! many a weary wight,
Weary of life and light,
Would fain lie down with thee.

Flee, little tender nursling!
Flee to thy grassy nest—
There the first flowers shall blow,
The first pure flake of snow
Shall fall upon thy breast.

Peace! peace! the little bosom
Labours with shortening breath.
Peace! peace! that tremulous sigh
Speaks his departure nigh—
Those are the damps of Death.

I've seen thee in thy beauty,
A thing all health and glee;
But never then, wert thou
So beautiful, as now,
Baby! thou seem'st to me.

Thine upturn'd eyes glazed over
Like harebells wet with dew—
Already veil'd and hid
By the convulsed lid,
Their pupils darkly blue.

Thy little mouth half open,
The soft lip quivering,
As if, like summer air,
Ruffling the rose leaves, there
Thy soul were fluttering.

Mount up, immortal essence!
Young spirit! hence—depart!
And is *this* Death?—Dread Thing!
If such thy visiting,
How beautiful thou art!

Oh! I could gaze for ever
Upon that waxen face,
So passionless! so pure!
The little shrine was sure
An angel's dwelling place.

Thou weepest, childless mother!
Ay, weep—'twill ease thine heart—
He was thy first-born son—
Thy first, thine only one—
'Tis hard from him to part.

'Tis hard to lay thy darling
Deep in the damp cold earth,
His empty crib to see,
His silent nursery,
Late ringing with his mirth.

To meet again in slumber
His small mouth's rosy kiss,
Then—waken'd with a start,
By thine own throbbing heart—
His twining arms to miss.

And then, to lie and weep,
And think the live-long night,
(Feeding thine own distress
With accurate greediness,)
Of every past delight.

Of all his winning ways,
His pretty, playful smiles,
His joy at sight of thee,
His tricks, his mimickry,
And all his little wiles.

Oh! these are recollections
Round mothers hearts that cling!
That mingle with the tears
And smiles of after years,
With oft awakening.

But thou wilt then, fond mother,
In after years, look back
(Time brings such wondrous easing)
With sadness not unpleasing,
Even on this gloomy track.

Thou'lt say, " My first-born blessing!
It almost broke my heart,
When thou wert forced to go,
And yet for thee, I know
'Twas better to depart.

God took thee in his mercy,
A lamb untask'd—untried—
He fought the fight for thee—
He won the victory—
And thou art sanctified.

I look around, and see
The evil ways of men,
And oh, beloved child!
I'm more than reconciled
To thy departure then.

The little arms that clasped me,
The innocent lips that prest,
Would they have been as pure
Till now, as when of yore
I lull'd thee on my breast?

Now, like a dew-drop shrined
Within a chrystal stone,
Thou'rt safe in Heaven, my dove!
Safe with the source of Love,
The everlasting One!

And when the hour arrives,
From flesh that sets me free,
Thy spirit may await,
The first at Heaven's gate,
To meet and welcome me."

THE NIGHT-SMELLING STOCK.

Come, look at this Plant, with its narrow pale leaves,
And its tall, slim, delicate stem,
Thinly studded with flowers!—Yes, with flowers!—
There they are!—
Don't you see at each joint there's a little brown star?
But, in truth, there's no beauty in them.

So you ask why I keep it? the little mean thing!—
Why I stick it up here, just in sight;—
'Tis a fancy of mine.—"A strange fancy!" you say;
"No accounting for tastes!"—In this instance you may,
For the flower .... But I'll tell you to-night.—

Some six hours hence, when the Lady Moon
Looks down on that bastion'd wall,—
When the twinkling stars dance silently
On the rippling surface of the sea,
And the heavy night-dews fall,—

Then meet me again in this casement niche,
On the spot where we're standing now.—
Nay, question not wherefore?—Perhaps, with me,
To look out on the night, and the broad, bright sea,
And to hear its majestic flow!—

* * * * * * * *

Well, we're met here again; and the moonlight sleeps
On the sea, and the bastion'd wall;
And the flowers there below——How the night-wind
brings
Their delicious breath on its dewy wings!—
"But there's one," say you, "sweeter than all!"

"Which is it? The myrtle, or jessamine,
Or their sovereign lady the rose?
Or the heliotrope? or the virgin's-bower?—
What! neither?"—Oh, no; 'tis some other flower,
Far sweeter than either of those.

Far sweeter!—And where, think you, groweth the plant
That exhaleth such perfume rare?—
Look about, up and down,—But take care! or you'll break,
With your elbow, that poor little thing that's so weak,
. . . . "Why, 'tis *that* smells so sweet, I declare!"

Ah ha! is it *that?* Have you found out now
Why I cherish that odd little fright?—
"All is not gold that glitters," you know;
And it is not all worth makes the greatest show
In the glare of the strongest light.

There are *human* flowers full many, I trow,
As unlovely as that by your side,
That a common observer passeth by,
With a scornful lip, and a careless eye,
In the hey-day of pleasure and pride.

But move one of those to some quiet spot,
From the mid-day sun's broad glare,
Where domestic peace broods with dove-like wing;
And try if the homely, despised thing,
May not yield sweet fragrance there.

Or wait till the days of trial come—
The dark days of trouble and woe;
When they shrink, and shut up, late so bright in the sun;—
Then turn to the little despised one,
And see if 'twill serve you so.—

And judge not again at a single glance;
Nor pass sentence hastily:—
There are many good things in this world of ours—
Many sweet things and rare!—weeds that prove precious flowers!—
Little dreamt of by you or me.

" I NEVER CAST A FLOWER AWAY."

I NEVER cast a flower away,
The gift of one who cared for me,—
A little flower—a faded flower,—
But it was done reluctantly.—

I never look'd a last adieu
To things familiar, but my heart
Shrank with a feeling almost pain,
Even from their lifelessness to part.—

I never spoke the word " Farewell,"
But with an utterance faint and broken;
An earth-sick longing for the time
When it shall never more be spoken.

THOUGHTS ON LETTER-WRITING.

EPISTOLARY, as well as personal intercourse, is, according to the mode in which it is carried on, one of the pleasantest or most irksome things in the world. It is delightful to drop in on a friend without the solemn prelude of invitation and acceptance; to join a social circle, where we may suffer our minds and hearts to relax and expand, in the happy consciousness of perfect security from invidious remark, and carping criticism,—where we may give the reins to the sportiveness of innocent fancy, or the enthusiasm of warm-hearted feeling,—where we may talk sense or nonsense—(I pity people who *cannot* talk nonsense!)—without fear of being looked into icicles, by the cold surprise of unimaginative people—living pieces of clock-work—who dare not themselves utter a word, or lift up a little finger, without first

weighing the important point in the hair-balance of propriety and good breeding. It is equally delightful to let the pen talk freely and unpremeditatedly, to one by whom we are sure of being understood; but a formal letter, like a ceremonious morning visit, is tedious alike to the writer and receiver, for the most part made up of unmeaning phrases, trite observations, complimentary flourishes, and protestations of respect and attachment, so far not deceitful, that they never deceive anybody. Oh! the misery of having to compose a set, proper, well-worded, correctly pointed, polite, elegant epistle—one that must have a beginning, a middle, and an end, as methodically arranged and proportioned as the several parts of a sermon under three heads, or the three gradations of shade in a school-girl's first landscape. For my part, I would rather be set to beat hemp, or weed in a turnip-field, than to write such a letter exactly every month or every fortnight, at the precise point of time from the date of our correspondent's last communication, that he or she set pen to paper after the receipt of ours, as if one's thoughts bubbled up to the well-head periodically a pint at a time, to be bottled off for immediate use. Thought!

What has thought to do in such a correspondence? It murders thought, quenches fancy, spoils paper, wears out innocent goose-quills. "I'd rather be a kitten and cry mew! than one of those same" prosing letter-mongers.

Surely in this age of invention something may be struck out to obviate the necessity (if such necessity exists) of so tasking, degrading human intellect. Why should there not be constructed a sort of mute barrel-organ, on the plan of those that play sets of tunes and country-dances, to indite a catalogue of polite epistles, sufficiently meaning to answer all the purposes of ceremonious good *breeding*? Oh the unspeakable relief (were such a consummation possible) of having only to *grind* an answer to one of "one's dear five hundred friends!" Or suppose there were to be an epistolary steam-engine! Steam does everything now-a-days. Worthy Mr Brunel, take the matter into serious consideration, I beseech you. Set your wits to work, and achieve what would be the masterpiece of your marvellous inventions. The block-machine at Portsmouth would be nothing to it. *That* spares manual labour—*this* would relieve mental drudgery; and thousands yet unborn . . . .

But hold! I am not so sure that the female sex in general may quite enter into my views of the subject. Those who pique themselves on "l'éloquence du billet;" those fair Scribblerinas just emancipated from boarding-school restraint, or from the dragonism of their governesses, just beginning to pour out their pretty souls in the refined intercourse of sentimental, confidential, ineffable correspondence, with some Angelina, Seraphina, or Laura Matilda, dwelling at Rosemount Cottage, or Myrtle Villa, or Eglantine Vale; to indite beautiful litfle notes with long-tailed letters, upon vellum-paper with pink margins, sealed with sweet mottos and dainty devices—all new and original—"Je ne change qu'en mourrant," "Forget-me-not," or Cupid with a rose, and "Une seule me suffit;" the whole delicately perfumed with musk and atar of roses: young ladies who collect "copies of verses" and charades, receipts for painting boxes and making album-baskets and bead-necklaces; keep albums, copy patterns, make bread-seals, work little dogs upon footstools, and paint flowers without shadow—Oh no! the epistolary steam-engine will never come into favour with those dear industrious creatures, whose

minds are in a state of constant activity, like the little eels in rain-water, and must work off their exuberant energies somehow. *They* must luxuriate in "the feast of reason and the flow of soul;" and they must write—ye gods!—how they *do* write!

But for another genus of female scribes. Unhappy innocents! who groan in spirit at the dire necessity of having to hammer out one of those aforesaid terrible epistles, though having in due form dated the gilt-edged sheet that lies outspread before them in appalling whiteness; having also felicitously achieved the customary and most veracious exordium—"My *dear* Mrs P.;" or, "My *dearest* Lady V.;" or, "My *dear, dear* . . . anything else," feel that they are *in for it*, and must say something. Oh! that *something* that must be made out of *nothing!* Those bricks that must be made without straw!—those pages that must be covered over with words!—yea, with words that must be sewed into sentences—yea, with sentences that must *seem* to mean something!—the whole to be ingeniously tacked together—all neatly fitted and dove-tailed, so as to form when complete, one smooth, polished surface of elegant composition—What were the la-

bours of Hercules to such a task? The very thought of it puts one in a mental perspiration; and from my inmost heart I compassionate the unfortunates, now (at this very moment perhaps) screwed up perpendicular in the seat of torture,—having, in the right hand, a fresh-nibbed patent pen, (the infliction of the thumb-screw would be more bearable!) dipped ever and anon in the ink-bottle, as if to fish up ideas,—and, under the outspread palm of the left hand, (spread out immoveably in the very flatness of despair!) a fair sheet of the best Bath post, (ready to receive ideas yet unhatched,) on which their eyes are rivetted with a stare of disconsolate perplexity, infinitely touching to a feeling mind. To such unhappy persons, in whose miseries I deeply sympathise, ... Have I not groaned under the experience of similar horrors, from the hour when I was first shut up (under lock and key, I believe) to indite a dutiful epistle to an honoured aunt? I remember, as if it had occurred but yesterday, the moment when she, who had enjoined the task, entered to inspect the performance, for which, by her calculation, ample time had been allowed me—I remember how sheepishly I hung down my head, and began twitch-

ing to pieces the feathery top of my pen, when she snatched from before me the paper, on which I had made no farther progress than, "My dear *Ant*," angrily exclaiming, "What, child! have you been shut up here three hours to call your aunt a pismire!"

From that hour of humiliation, I have too often groaned under the endurance of like penance; and have learnt, from my own sufferings, to commiserate those of my dear sisters in affliction. To those distressed persons, then, I feel myself irresistibly impelled to offer a few hints, (the fruit of long and bitter experience,) which, if they have not been already suggested by their own observation, may prove serviceable in the hour of emergency.

Let them, ... or suppose I address myself to *one* particular sufferer;—there is something more satisfactory, more confidential, in communicating one's ideas, when, as Moore says, "heart speaks to heart!" —Therefore, dear sister in affliction, to *you* I address myself. And, first, I recommend,—Take always special care to write by candlelight; for not only is the apparently unimportant operation of snuffing the candle in itself a momentary relief to the depressing consciousness of mental vacuum, but not unfrequent-

ly that trifling manual exertion, together with the brightening flame of the taper, elicits, as it were, a sympathetic spark of fortunate conception from the dull embers of the brain. Should such a one occur, seize it quickly and dexterously, but, at the same time, with tender caution, so as not to huddle up and contract in one short, paltry sentence, that which, if ingeniously managed, may be beat out, and wire-drawn, so as to undulate smoothly and gracefully over a whole page. For the more skilful practice of this invaluable art of dilating, it will be expedient to stock your memory with a large assortment of those precious words of many syllables that fill whole lines at once; "incomprehensibly,—amazingly,—indubitably,—inconceivably,—incontrovertibly," &c. &c. These words have not only, to the eye, a fine general effect, but, if the letter is read aloud, there is something very imposing in the mere sound of them; and a long paragraph about nothing, composed in this grand rolling style, will, nine times out of ten, pass current for very fine writing, when a pithy sentence, full of excellent matter, will be skimmed over with contempt, if

"Ten low words creep slow in one dull line."

An opportunity of introducing these *thunderers* is invaluable to a distressed spinner, besides that they are really as delightful to trace on the paper, as a copy all m's and n's is to a child,—"Command you may, your mind from play."

I have known a judicious selection of such, cunningly arranged, and neatly linked together with a few monosyllables, interjections, and epithets, (the two latter may be liberally used with good general effect,) so worked up as to form altogether a very respectable, and even elegant composition; such as, amongst the best judges of that peculiar style, has been pronounced "a charming letter!"—and yet, by more homely, matter-of-fact readers, it would not, perhaps, have been allowed to contain one sentence of meaning in the whole three pages, two ends, and precious little bit under the seal!

Then the pause—the break—has altogether a picturesque effect; long-tailed "down-sweeping" and "up-swaling" letters, and d's turning "jauntily" over, with a grand whisking curve like squirrels' tails, are not only beautiful in themselves, but the use of them necessarily creates such a space between the lines, as helps one honourably and expeditiously

over the ground to be covered. Your "down-sweepers," in particular, may be dashed off so boldly, as beautifully to obscure the line underneath, without rendering it wholly illegible. This, however, is but a minor elegance,—a mere illumination of the manuscript. I pass on to remarks of more importance.

There is one expedient which, if judiciously resorted to, is of inestimable value, in times of extreme mental dearth, but requiring to be managed with such nice *tact*, that none but an experienced spinner should have recourse to it. You *may* contrive, by the help of a little alteration, amplification, and transposition, &c. &c. to amuse your correspondent with a recapitulation of the very matter which formed the groundwork of his or her last epistle to yourself. Should he detect this manœuvre (against which the chances are at least equal) he will be restrained by good-breeding from making any observations to yourself on the subject, and indeed (if he be a candid and reasonable person) will either give you credit for the ingenious and obliging manner in which you have contrived to refresh his memory, and to impress on it more indelibly those interesting points he had con-

ceived worthy to fix your attention. Again—you need not apprehend that he shall turn your own arms against you. The ammunition will be quite spent in your retort, so that it will still be his business to furnish fresh charges—everything (you perceive) at this game, depending on the first fire.

This species of manœuvre, as I have already observed, should by no means be rashly ventured on, but it is an art well worth the trouble of acquiring, at the expense of some pains and study—one (if you are so fortunate as to become a proficient in it) that will relieve you from all further anxiety on the score of letter-writing, furnishing you, at the expense of your correspondents, with ample materials for your own epistolary compositions. As to the strict honesty of this proceeding, no conscience need, I think, be so squeamish as to hesitate on the subject; for, in fact, what has conscience to do with the style of correspondence under our present consideration? It were well, in truth, if a fine lady's letter were often so honestly made up; for (generally speaking) would not the abstract of such a one, fairly interpreted, run thus?

MY DEAREST LADY D.

WITH feelings of the most inexpressibly affectionate interest, I take up my pen to congratulate you on the marriage of your lovely accomplished Alethea.

To you, who know every thought of my heart, it is almost unnecessary to say, that next to the maternal tenderness with which I watch over my own girls, I am most anxiously interested in everything that relates to your charming family.

That sweet love Alethea, has always, you know, been my peculiar favourite; and tears of exulting tenderness swell into my eyes, when I think of the brilliant establishment you have secured for her.

Our long intimacy, my beloved friend, and my maternal affection for the dear creature, are pleas which I shall urge in claiming the delightful office of presenting her. With what pride shall I see the superb V— diamonds in her lovely auburn locks.

Soon, very soon, friend of my heart! may I have to congratulate you on some equally advantageous establishment for your sweet delicate Anna Maria.

YOU TIRESOME OLD TOAD,

YOU'VE manœuvred off one of your gawky frights at last; and I must say something on the occasion.

How the deuce did you contrive to hook that noodle of a lord, when I have been angling ever since he came of age to catch him for my eldest girl?

That pert minx Alethea has always been my peculiar aversion; and I'm ready to cry with spite at the idea of her being a Countess.

You can't hobble to court on your crutches, so I, forsooth, shall be asked to present her *Ladyship*— and I must do it, though I know I shall expire with vexation at seeing the V— diamonds in her odious red hair.

One comfort is, you'll never be able to get off that little humpbacked thing Anna Maria; and you know well enough there's no hope of it, so hate to be talked to about her.

I earnestly hope that foolish story (which you have heard of course) about Lord V.'s keeping an opera girl at Paris, and having lost L.10,000 at the Salon, at one sitting, will not reach the ear of our sweet sensitive girl. But people are so malicious!

Where are your two lovely boys? We have not seen them since they came from Eton, and you know how I delight in their charming spirits.

&c. &c. &c. &c. &c.

And remains ever,

With the most inviolable attachment,

My dearest Lady D.'s

Most truly affectionate,

M. G.

You won't care much about it, even if it were true: but I can think of nothing else to plague the old cat. I'll take care the young one shall know it *somehow.*

I'd as lieve have a couple of wild-cats turn'd loose into my drawing-room as those two riotous cubs. But I've nine girls to bring out yet, and the young M.'s will be tolerable catches, though only honourables.

Fudge, fudge, fudge, fudge, fudge!

I think I have given you enough for one dose, though I am afraid you're up to me.

I hate you cordially; *that's certain.*

M. G.

" THERE IS A TONGUE IN EVERY LEAF."

THERE is a tongue in every leaf,
A voice in every rill!
A voice that speaketh everywhere,
In flood and fire, through earth and air,
A tongue that's never still.

'Tis the Great Spirit, wide diffused
Through everything we see,
That with our spirits communeth
Of things mysterious—Life and Death—
Time and Eternity.

I see him in the blazing sun,
And in the thunder-cloud—
I hear him in the mighty roar,
That rusheth through the forest hoar
When winds are piping loud.

I see him, hear him everywhere,
In all things—Darkness, Light,
Silence and Sound—but, most of all,
When slumber's dusky curtains fall
At the dead hour of night.

I *feel* him in the silent dews
By grateful earth betray'd—
I *feel* him in the gentle showers,
The soft south wind—the breath of flowers—
The sunshine and the shade.

And yet, ungrateful that I am!
I've turn'd in sullen mood
From all these things,—whereof he said,
When the great work was finished,
That they were "Very good!"

My sadness on the fairest things
Fell like unwholesome dew—
The darkness that encompass'd me,
The gloom I felt so palpably,
Mine own dark spirit threw.

Yet he was patient, slow to wrath,
Though ev'ry day provoked
By selfish, pining discontent,
Acceptance cold, or negligent,
And promises revoked.

And still the same rich feast was spread
For my insensate heart.
Not always so—I woke again
To join creation's rapt'rous strain,—
"Oh Lord! how good Thou art!"

The clouds drew up, the shadows fled,
The glorious sun broke out—
And Love, and Hope, and Gratitude,
Dispell'd that miserable mood
Of darkness and of doubt.

THE MOTHER'S LAMENT.

My child was beautiful and brave!
An opening flower of spring!
He moulders in a distant grave,
A cold forgotten thing.
Forgotten!—Ay, by all but me,
As e'en the best beloved must be—
Farewell, farewell, my dearest!

Methinks 't had been a comfort now
To have caught his parting breath—
Had I been near, from his damp brow
To wipe the dews of death—
With one long ling'ring kiss to close
His eyelids for the last repose—
Farewell, farewell, my dearest!

I little thought such wish to prove
When cradled on my breast;
With all a mother's cautious love
His sleeping lids I prest.
Alas! alas! his dying head
Was pillow'd on a colder bed—
Farewell, farewell, my dearest!

They told me Vict'ry's laurels wreath'd
His youthful temples round—
That "Vict'ry!" from his lips was breathed,
The last exulting sound—
Cold comfort to a mother's ear,
That longed his *living* voice to hear—
Farewell, farewell, my dearest!

E'en so thy gallant father died,
When thou, poor orphan child!
A helpless prattler at my side,
My widowed grief beguiled.
But now, bereaved of all in thee,
What earthly voice shall comfort me?—
Farewell, farewell, my dearest!

MY EVENING.

FAREWELL, bright Sun! mine eyes have watch'd
Thine hour of waning light—
And tender twilight! fare thee well—
And welcome star-crown'd night!

Pale! serious! silent! with deep spell
Lulling the heart to rest;
As lulls the mother's low sweet song,
The infant on her breast.

Mine own beloved hour!—mine own!
Sacred to quiet thought,
To sacred mem'ries, to calm joys,
With no false lustre fraught!

Mine own beloved hour! for now,
Methinks, with garish day,
I shut the world out, and with those
Long lost, or far away,

The dead, the absent, once again
My soul holds converse free—
To such illusions, Life! how dull
Thy best reality!

The vernal nights are chilly yet,
And cheerily, and bright,
The hearth still blazes, flashing round
Its ruddy, flick'ring light.

"Bring in the lamp——so—set it there,
Just show its veiled ray,
(Leaving all else in shadowy tone,)
Falls on my *book*——and—stay—

"Leave my work by me"—Well I love
The needle's useful art;—
'Tis unambitious,—womanly,—
And mine's a woman's heart.

Not that I ply with sempstress rage,
As if for life, or bread;—
No, sooth to say—unconsciously
Slackening the half-drawn thread,

From fingers that (as spell-bound) stop,
Pointing the needle wrong,
Mine eyes towards the open book
Stray oft, and tarry long.—

"Stop! stop! Leave open the glass-door
Into that winter bower;"—
For soon therein th' uprisen moon
Will pour her silvery shower;

Will glitter on those glossy leaves;
On that white pavement shine:
And dally with her eastern love,
That wreathing jessamine.—

"Thanks, Lizzy!—No; there's nothing more
Thy loving zeal can do;—
Only—Oh yes!—that gipsy flower,*
Set *that* beside me too."—

* The night-smelling stock.

"That Ethiop, in its china vase?"—
"Ay; set it *here;*—that's right.—
Shut the door after you."—'Tis done;
I'm settled for the night.

Settled and snug;—and, first, as if
The fact to ascertain,
I glance around, and stir the fire,
And trim the lamp again.

Then, dusky flower! I stoop t' inhale
Thy fragrance. Thou art one,
That wooeth not the vulgar eye,
Nor the broad staring sun:

Therefore I love thee!—(Selfish love
Such preference may be;)
That thou reservest all thy sweets,
Coy thing! for night and me.—

What sound was that?—Ah, Madam Puss!
I know that tender mew—
That meek, white face—those sea-green eyes—
Those whiskers, wet with dew,

To the cold glass—the greenhouse glass—
Press'd closely from without;—
Well, thou art heard—I'll let thee in,
Though skulking home, no doubt,

From lawless prowl.—Ah, ruthless cat!
What evil hast thou done?
What deeds of rapine, the broad eye
Of open day that shun?

What! not a feather pluck'd to-night?
Is that what thou wouldst tell,
With that soft purr, those winking eyes,
And waving tail?—Well, well,

I know thee, friend!—But get thee in,
By Ranger stretch and doze;—
Nay, never growl, old man! her tail
Just whisk'd across thy nose.

But 'twas no act premeditate,
Thy greatness to molest:
Then, with that long luxurious sigh,
Sink down again to rest;

But not before one loving look
Toward me, with that long sigh,
Says, " Mistress mine! all's right, all's well!
Thou'rt there, and here am *I!*"—

That point at rest, we're still again.—
I on my work intent;
At least, with poring eyes thereon,
In seeming earnest bent:

And fingers, nimble at their task,
Mechanically true;
Tho' heaven knows where, what scenes, the while,
My thoughts are travelling to!

Now far from earth—now over earth,
Travèrsing lands and seas;—
Now stringing, in a sing-song mood,
Such idle rhymes as these;—

Now dwelling on departed days,—
Ah! *that's* no lightsome mood;—
On those to come—no longer now
Through Hope's bright focus view'd.—

On that which is—ay, there I pause,
No more in young delight;
But patient, grateful, well assured,
"Whatever is, is right!"—

And all to be is in His hands,—
Oh, who would take it thence?—
Give me not up to mine own will,
Merciful Providence!—

Such thought, when other thoughts may be
Are darkening into gloom,
Comes to me like the angel shape,
That, standing by the tomb,

Cheer'd those who came to sorrow there.—
And then I see, and bless
His love in all that he withholds,
And all I still possess.—

So varied,—now with book, or work,
Or pensive reverie,
Or waking dreams, or fancy flights,
Or scribbling vein may be;

Or eke the pencil's cunning craft,
Or lowly murmured lay,
To the according viola,—
Calm evening slips away.

The felt-shod hours move swiftly on,
Until the stroke of ten
(The accustom'd signal) summons round
My little household. Then,

The door unclosing, enters first
That aged, faithful friend,
Whose prayer is with her Master's child
Her blameless days to end.

The younger pair come close behind;
But *her* dear hand alone,—
(Her dear old hand! now tremulous
With palsying weakness grown,)—

Must rev'rently before me place
The Sacred Book.—'Tis there,—
And all our voices, all our hearts,
Unite in solemn prayer.

In praise and thanksgiving, for all
The blessings of the light;
In prayer, that He would keep us through
The watches of the night.—

A simple rite! and soon perform'd;
Leaving, in every breast,
A heart more fittingly prepared
For sweet, untroubled rest.

And so we part.—But not before,
Dear Nurse! a kiss from thee
Imprints my brow. Thy fond Good-night!
To God commending me!—

Amen!—and may His angels keep
Their watch around thy bed,
And guard from every hurtful thing
That venerable head!

FAREWELL TO MY FRIENDS.

Oh! wear no mourning weeds for me,
When I am laid i' the ground!
Oh! shed no tears for one whose sleep
Will then be sweet and sound!—

Only, my friends! do this for me,—
Pluck many a pale primrose,
And strew them on my shroud, before
The coffin-lid they close.

And lay the heart's-ease on my breast,
(Meet emblem there 'twill be,)
And gently place in my cold hand
A sprig of rosemary..

And by the buried bones of those
Whom living I loved best;
See me at last laid quietly—
Then leave me to my rest.

And when the church-bell tolls for me
Its last, long, hollow knell;
As the deep murmur dies away,
Bid me a kind farewell.—

And, stay—Methinks there's something yet
I'd fain request of ye;
Something—I'd bid ye comfort, keep,
Or love, for love of me,—

My nurse!—Oh! she will only wait
Till I am fast asleep,
Then close beside me, stealthily,
To her own pillow creep.

My dog!—Poor fellow! Let him not
Know hunger—hardship—wrong—
But he is old and feeble too—
He will not miss me long.

My dwelling!—That will pass away
To those, when I am gone,
Will raze the lowly edifice
To its foundation-stone.

My flowers!—That in deep loneliness
Have been as friends to me—
My garden!—That, let run to waste,
A common field will be.

My picture!—That's already yours—
Resemblance true, ye say—
Oh, true indeed!—A thing of dust,
That vanisheth away!

My harp!—But that's a fairy gift
I can bequeath to none—
Unearthly hands will take it back
When the last strain is done.

So then, I've nothing more to ask,
And little left to give,
And yet I know, in your kind hearts
My memory will live.

And so farewell, my dear good friends!
And farewell, world, to thee—
I part with some in love—With all
In peace and charity.

THE PRIMROSE.

I saw it in my evening walk,
A little lonely flower!
Under a hollow bank it grew,
Deep in a mossy bower.

An oak's gnarled root, to roof the cave
With Gothic fret-work sprung,
Whence jewell'd fern, and arum leaves,
And ivy garlands hung.

And from beneath came sparkling out,
From a fall'n tree's old shell,
A little rill, that clipt about
The lady in her cell.

And there, methought, with bashful pride,
She seem'd to sit and look
On her own maiden loveliness,
Pale imaged in the brook.

No other flower—no rival grew
Beside my pensive maid;
She dwelt alone, a cloister'd nun
In solitude and shade.

No sun-beam on that fairy well
Darted its dazzling light—
Only, methought, some clear, cold star
Might tremble there at night.

No ruffling wind could reach her there—
No eye, methought, but mine,
Or the young lamb's, that came to drink,
Had spied her secret shrine.

And there was pleasantness to me
In such belief. Cold eyes
That slight dear Nature's lowliness,
Profane her mysteries.

Long time I look'd and linger'd there,
Absorb'd in still delight—
My spirit drank deep quietness
In, with that quiet sight.

FAREWELL TO GREECE.

FAREWELL for ever, classic land
Of tyrants and of slaves!
My homeward path lies far away
Over the dark blue waves:

And when I go, no marble fanes
From Myrtle steeps arise,
Nor shineth there such fervid suns
From such unclouded skies.

But yet, the earth of that dear land
Is holier earth to me,
Than thine, immortal Marathon,
Or thine, Thermopylæ.

For there my father's ashes rest,
And living hearts there be—
Warm living hearts, and loving ones,
That still remember me.

And, oh! the land that welcometh
To *one* such bosom shrine,
Though all beside were ruin'd—lost—
That land would still be mine.

Ay, mine!—albeit the breath of life
Not there I breathed first—
Ay, mine!—albeit with barrenness
And polar darkness curst.

The bird that wanders all day long,
At sun-set seeks her nest—
I've wander'd long—my native land!
Now take me to thy rest.

THE SMUGGLER.

I SPENT the whole of last summer, and part of the ensuing winter, on the Hampshire coast, visiting successively most of its sea-ports and watering-places, and enjoying its beautiful diversity of sea and wood scenery, often so intermingled that the forest-trees dip down their flexile branches into the salt-waters of the solent sea; and green lawns and heathy glades slope down to the edge of the silver sands, and not unfrequently to the very brink of the water.

In no part of Hampshire is this characteristic beauty more strikingly exemplified than at the back of the Isle of Wight, that miniature abstract of all

that is grand and lovely in the parent Isle, of which it is so aptly denominated "The Garden."

Early in August, I crossed over from Portsmouth to Ryde, purposing to fix my head-quarters there, and from thence to make excursions to all such places as are accounted worthy the tourist's notice. But a guide-book is at best an unsympathising companion, cold and formal (though not quite so tiresome) as the human machine that leads you over some old abbey, or venerable cathedral, pointing out, indeed, in its dull drowsy tone, unvaried to all visitors, the principal monuments or chapels, but passing by unnoticed a hundred less outwardly-distinguished spots, when feeling would love to linger, and sentiment find inexhaustible sources of interest and contemplation.

For lack of a better, however, I set out with my silent guide, but soon strayed wide of its directions, rambling hither and thither, often tarrying days and hours in places unhonoured by its notice, and perversely deviating from the beaten road that would have conducted some more docile tourist, and one of less independent taste, to such or such a noble-

man's or gentleman's seat, or summer-house, or pavilion, built on purpose to be visited and admired. But I did not shape my course thus designedly in a spirit of opposition to the mute director, whose not unserviceable clue led me at last among the romantic rocks and cottages of Shanklin, Niton, and Undercliff. It led me, indeed, to those enchanting spots, and to their beautiful vicinity, but to entice me thence was more than all its inviting promises could effect; and, finally, I took up my abode for an indefinite time in a cottage of native grey-stone, backed by the solid rock, and tapestried in front with such an interwoven texture of rose and myrtle, as half-hid the little casements, and aspired far over the thatched roof and projecting eaves.

Days, weeks, months, slipt away imperceptibly in this delicious retreat, and in all the luxury of lounging felicity. Mine was *idleness*, it is true—the sensation of perfect exemption from all existing necessity of mental or corporeal exertion—not suspension of ideas, but rather a festival of mind, during which the wild vagrant thought was at liberty to wander at will beyond the narrow boundaries, within which

the cares, and claims, and business of this world, too often restrained her natural excursiveness.

Summer passed away—the harvest was reaped and gathered into the barns—the hazel-hedges were despoiled of their last clusters of nuts—autumn verged on the approach of winter—and I still tenanted the rock-cottage. Nowhere are we so tenderly made sensible of the changes of the season, as in the sea's immediate vicinity—and the back of the Isle of Wight is, of all stations on our coast, that where this common remark is most forcibly illustrated. Completely screened from the north by a continuous wall of high rocky cliff, its shores are exposed only to the southern and westerly winds, and those are tempered to the peculiar softness always—almost always, perceptible in sea-breezes—on a mild autumn's day, or bright winter's morning, when the sun sparkles on the white sands and scentillating waves—or on the waveless mirror of the deep blue sea—on the sails of the little fishing-boats, that steal along-shore with their wings spread open like large butterflies—on the glancing silver of the sea-gull's wings, as she dives after her finny prey, or flashes upward through

a shower of feathery foam—or on the tall grey cliffs, tinted with many-coloured lichens. A lounger on the beach will hardly perceive that the year is in "its sear and yellow leaf," or already fallen into the decrepitude of winter. And when his awful heralds, the unchained elements, proclaim aloud that the hoary tyrant *hath* commenced his reign—when the winds are let loose from their caverns, and the agitated sea rolls its waves in mountainous ridges on the rocky coast—when the porpoise heaves up its black bulk, and disports itself with uncouth gambols amidst the foam of the shallower waters—when the cormorant's screams mingle in harsh concord with the howling blast. Then!—oh then! who can tear himself from the contemplation of a scene, more sublimely interesting than all the calm loveliness of a summer prospect? To me, its attractions were irresistible; and besides those of inanimate nature, I found other sources of lively interest, in studying the character and habits of the almost amphibious dwellers on that island coast. Generally speaking, there is something peculiarly interesting in the character of seafaring men—even of those whose voy-

ages have extended little beyond the windings of their own shores. The fisherman's life, indeed, may be accounted one of the most incessant peril. For daily bread, he must brave daily dangers. In that season when the tiller of the ground rests from his labours—when the artisan and mechanic are warmly housed—when the dormouse and the squirrel sleep in their soft woolly nests, and the little birds find shelter in hollow-trees and banks, or migrate to milder regions, the poor fisherman must encounter all the fury of the combined elements, for his children's bread is scattered on the waters.

It is this perpetually enforced familiarity with danger, that interests our feelings so powerfully in their behalf, together with its concomitant effects on their character—undaunted hardihood, insurmountable perseverance, almost heroic daring, and, generally speaking, a simplicity of heart, and a tenderness of deportment towards the females and the little ones of their families, finely contrasting their rugged exterior. But, unfortunately, it is not only in their ostensible calling of fishermen, that these men are forward in effronting danger. The tempta-

tions held out by contraband traffic, too often allure them from their honest and peaceable avocations, to brave the laws of their country, and encounter the most fearful risks in pursuit of precarious, though sometimes considerable gains. Of late, this desperate trade has extended almost to a regularly-organized system; and in spite of all the preventive measures adopted by the government of the country, it is too obvious, that the number of these "free traders" is yearly increasing, and that their hazardous commerce is more daringly and more vigorously carried on. Along the Hampshire coast, and more particularly in the Isle of Wight, almost every seafaring man is concerned in it to a greater or less extent. For the most part, they are connected in secret associations, both for co-operation and defence; and there is a sort of freemasonry amongst them, the signs and tokens of which are soon discernible to an attentive observer, and one whose unofficial character awakens no distrust on their part. "The Custom-house Sharks," as they call them, are not their most formidable foes, for they wage a more desperate warfare (as recent circumstances have too fa-

tally testified) with that part of our naval armament employed by Government on the preventive service. Some of the vessels on those stations are perpetually hovering along our coasts; but in spite of their utmost vigilance, immense quantities of contraband goods are almost nightly landed, and nowhere with more daring frequency than in the Isle of Wight.

In my rambles along its shores, the inhabitants of almost every cottage and fisherman's cabin, for many miles round, became known to me. I have at all times a peculiar pleasure in conversing with this class of people—in listening with familiar interest (to which they are never insensible) to the details of their feelings and opinions, and to the homely history of their obscure lives and domestic cares.

With some of my new acquaintances, I had ventured to expostulate on the iniquitous as well as hazardous nature of their secret traffic; and many wives and mothers sanctioned, with approving looks and half-constrained expressions, my remonstrances to their husbands and sons. These, for the most part, listened in sullen, down-looking silence, (not, however, expressive of ill-will towards me,) or some-

times answered my expostulations with the remark, that "Poor folk must *live*;"—that half of them, during the war, had earned an honest livelihood in channels that were now closed against them. They were turned adrift to shift for themselves, and must do something to get bread for their little ones. "And after all," they would generally conclude, "while the rich and great folks, and some of those that *made the laws*, too," (their ladies and daughters at least,) "were pleased to encourage their trade, it was a plain case they could not think much harm of those that carried it on."

This last was a stinging observation—one that generally silenced me for the moment, while it gave fresh fervency to my earnest wish, that the penalties of the law could be enforced ten, twenty, nay, an hundred fold, on those rich and great ones, who, in the mere wantonness of vanity, luxury, or idleness, tempted these poor creatures to offend, and subjected them to the severe, but necessary awards, of retributive justice.

Among those poor families was one, at whose cabin I stopped oftenest, and lingered longest, in my

evening rambles. The little dwelling was in a manner wedged into a cleft of the grey rock, up which, on every little shelf-like platform, the hand of industry had accumulated garden-mould, and fostered a beautiful vegetation; and, immediately before it, a patch of the loveliest greensward sloped down to the edge of the sea-sand, enamelled with aromatic wild thyme, and dotted, nearest the ocean, with tufts of thrift, centaury, and eringo, and with the gold-coloured blossoms of the horn poppy. The romantic appearance and peculiar neatness of the little cabin, had early attracted my attention, which was further interested by the singular appearance of its owner. He was a large, tall man, of about sixty, distinguished by an air of uncommon dignity, and by an accoutrement, the peculiarity of which, combined with his commanding carriage, and countenance of bold daring, always brought the Buccaneer of old times to my remembrance. He wore large, loose trowsers, of shaggy, dark blue cloth; a sort of woollen vest, broadly striped with the same colour, for the most part open at the throat and bosom, and girt in below with a broad leathern belt, in which a brace of horse-

pistols were generally stuck, and not unfrequently an old cutlass; and over his shoulder was slung a cross-belt of broad white knitting, to which was suspended a powder-flask, a leathern pouch, and often a short, thick duck-gun. A dark fur cap was the usual covering of his head; and his thick, black, curling hair, was not so much intermingled with grey, as streaked here and there with locks of perfect whiteness. Add to this costume, a fortnight's growth of grizzly, stubborn beard, (the crop was seldom of less standing,) and such was the *tout ensemble* of this uncommon personage. Notwithstanding this formidable equipment, however, his ostensible employment was the harmless one of a fisher of the deep,—though, to all appearance, not very zealously pursued; for, in the day time, he was oftener to be seen lying along the shore in the broad sunshine, or sauntering by the water's edge, or perched like a sea-fowl, immoveable for hours, on some commanding station of the crag, always with a pipe in his mouth—a meer-schaum pipe—(uncommon luxury for an English boatman!) and a spy-glass ever in his hand, or at his eye. He was oftener to be seen

thus, or cleaning the lock of his gun under the shadow of some projecting cliff, than busied with the trawling-net, or the eel-spear, or the hook and line, in his little boat, or mending her sails, or his nets, by the cabin door. At almost all hours of the night a light was seen burning within the cottage; and the master of the family, with his son, was invariably absent, when, as it often chanced with me, I looked in on them after dark, on my return from some distant spot to my own habitation.

At such an hour, I was sure to find the female inmates, (the wife and daughter of the man I have been describing,) in a state of evident perturbation, for which it was easy to assign a sufficient cause; but I had remonstrated in vain with the infatuated husband and father, and it was still more fruitless to argue with the helpless women.

Richard Campbell was not a native of the Isle of Wight, nor one trained, from his youth up, "to go down to the sea in ships, and occupy his business in deep waters."

For many generations his family had owned and cultivated a small farm in the north of England.

Himself had been bred a tiller of the ground, contrary to his own wishes, which had pointed, from his very cradle, to a sea-faring life; and all his hours of boyish pastime and youthful leisure, were spent on the salt element, close to which, at the head of a small bay or inlet, lay his paternal farm. Just as he had attained his twentieth year his father died, leaving him, (an only child,) the inheritor of all his little property, and at liberty to follow the bent of his own inclinations.

The temptation was strong. Tumultuous wishes and roving thoughts were busy in his heart; but "he was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow." He staid to comfort her old age, and to cultivate his little inheritance; partly influenced also by his attachment to a pretty blue-eyed girl, whose sweeter smiles rewarded his filial piety, and whose hand in wedlock was, shortly after, its richer recompence.

The widowed mother continued to dwell under her son's roof, tended like Naomi, by a daughter-in-law, as loving and dutiful as Ruth, but happier than the Hebrew matron, in the possession of both her children.

Many children were born to the young couple, "as likely boys and girls as ever the sun shone upon," said the wife of Campbell; from whom, at sundry times, I collected the simple annals I am relating. "But God was very good to them. He bade their store increase with their increasing family, and provided bread for the little mouths that were sent to crave for it. *She* never grudged her own labour; and a better or a kinder husband than she was blessed with, never woman had. To be sure he had his fancies and particular ways; and, when he could steal a holiday, all his delight was to spend it on the salt waves, (the worse luck!) for many an anxious hour had she known even then, when he was out in his little boat, shooting wild fowl, in the wild winter nights. But no harm ever came to him; only their eldest boy, their dear Maurice," (the mother never named him without glistening eyes,) "took after his father's fancy for the sea, and set his heart upon being a sailor." And the father called to mind his own youthful longings, and would not control those of his child; especially as he had yet another son, a fine promising lad, who took kindly to the farming

business, and already lightened his father's labour. The mother heard all, and "spake not a word though her heart was fit to break," for her son's choice was sanctioned by his father's approbation, but sorely she grieved at parting with her first-born, (what feelings are like those of a mother towards her first-born?) and the young Maurice was her most loving and dutiful child, and she had reared him with such care as only mothers can bestow, through the perilous years of a sickly infancy. But the father jested with her fears, and entered with the ardour of a boyish heart into his son's enterprising hopes; and at last the youth (who could not rest satisfied with her silent acquiescence) wrung from her a faltering and reluctant consent. And when she shook her head mournfully at his promises, of bringing rare and beautiful things from foreign parts for her and all his sisters, coaxed a half smile into her tearful looks, by concluding with—"And then, mother! I will stay quiet at home amongst you all, and never want to leave you again."—"My Maurice sailed away," said the mother, "and from that time everything went wrong. Before he had been gone a month, we bu-

ried my husband's mother, but God called her away in a good old age, so we had no right to take on heavily at her loss, though we felt it sorely, and so did all our little ones, who had learned to read their bible on her knees."

In addition to his own land, Campbell cultivated several acres, which he rented of a neighbouring gentleman, whose disposition was restlessly litigious, and Campbell's being unhappily fiery and impetuous, disputes arose between them, and proceeded to such lengths, that both parties finally referred their differences to legal arbitrement. After many tedious, and apparently frivolous delays, particularly trying to Campbell's irritable nature, the cause came on, and sentence was given in favour of his opponent; and from that hour he adopted the firm persuasion, that justice, impartial justice, was unattainable in the land of his fathers.

This fatal prejudice turned all his thoughts to bitterness—haunted him like a phantom in his fields—by his cheerful hearth—in his once peaceful bed, in the very embraces of his children, "who were born," he would tell them in the midst of their innocent ca-

resses, " slaves and bond-servants in the land where their fathers had been free men."

In this state of mind he listened, with eager credulity, to the speculative visions of a few agricultural adventurers, who had embarked their small capitals on American adventure, and were on the eve of quitting their native country to seek wealth, liberty, and independence, in the back settlements of the United States.

In an evil hour Campbell was prevailed on to embark his fortunes with those of the self-expatriated emigrants.

The tears and entreaties of his wife and children availed not to deter him from his rash purpose, and the unhappy mother was torn from her beloved home, where her heart lingered with a thousand tender reminiscences, and most tenaciously of all, in the affecting thought, that if ever her absent sailor returned to his native country, his first steps would be directed to the once happy dwelling of his parents, where the cold looks of the stranger would be all his welcome.

The ship on board which the Campbells were em-

barked, with their five remaining children, and all their worldly goods, performed two-thirds of her course with prosperous celerity: But as she neared her wished-for haven, the wind, which had hitherto been uninterruptedly favourable, became unsteady, then contrary, so that they lost sea-way for many days. At last a storm, which had been gathering with awfully gradual preparation, burst forth with tremendous fury. Three days and nights the vessel drove before it; but on the fourth the masts and rigging went overboard, and before the wreck could be cut away, a plank in the ship's side was stove in by the floating timbers. In the general hurry and confusion, when all hands were employed in hacking away the encumbrances and getting up jury masts, the leak remained undiscovered, till the water in the hold had gained to a depth of many feet; and though the pumps were set to work, and kept going, by the almost superhuman exertions of crew and passengers, all was unavailing, and to betake themselves to the boat was the last hurried and desperate resource. Campbell had succeeded in lowering his three youngest children into the long-

boat, already crowded with their fellow-sharers in calamity, and was preparing to send down his youngest son and daughter, and to follow them with their mother in his arms, when a woman, pressing before him with frantic haste, leapt down into the overloaded boat, which upset in an instant, and the perishing cry of twenty drowning creatures mingled with the agonizing shrieks of parents, husbands, and children, from the deck of the sinking ship. One other boat was yet alongside; and Campbell was at last seated in her, with his two remaining children and their unconscious mother, who had sunk into a state of blessed insensibility, when the drowning screams of her lost little ones rang in her ears. Five and twenty persons were wedged in this frail bark, with a cask of water and a small bag of biscuit. An old sail had been flung down with these scanty stores, which they contrived to hoist, on the subsiding of the storm, towards the evening of their first day's commitment, in that "forlorn hope," to the wide world of waters. Their compass had gone down in the long-boat, and faint indeed were their hopes of ever reaching land, from which they had no means

of computing their distance. But the unsleeping eye of Providence watched over them ; and on the fourth day of their melancholy progress, a sail making towards them was descried on the verge of the horizon. It neared, and the ship proved to be a homeward-bound West India trader, on board which the perishing creatures were received with prompt humanity ; and on her reaching her appointed haven (Portsmouth), Campbell, with his companions in misfortune, and the remnant of his late flourishing family, once more set foot on British earth. He had saved about his person a small residue of his property, but wholly insufficient to equip them for a second attempt, had he even been so obstinately bent on the prosecution of his Transatlantic scheme, as to persist in it against (what appeared to him) the declared will of Providence. Once, in his younger days, he had visited the Isle of Wight ; and the remembrance of its bowery cottages, and beautiful bays, were yet fresh in his mind. He crossed over with his family, and a few weeks put him in possession of a neat cabin and small fishing-boat ; and for a time, the little family was subsisted in frugal comfort, by the

united industry of the father and son. Soon after their settlement in the Island, their daughter (matured to lovely womanhood) married a respectable and enterprizing young man, the owner of a pilot-vessel. In the course of three years, she brought her husband as many children; and during that time all went well with them. But her William's occupation (a lucrative one in war-time) exposed him to frequent and fearful dangers; and one tempestuous winter's night, having ventured out to the assistance of a foundering sloop, his own little vessel perished in the attempt; and the morning's tide floated her husband's corpse to the feet of his distracted wife, as she stood on the sea-beach, watching every white sail that became visible through the haze of the grey-clouded dawn.

The forlorn widow and her orphan babes found a refuge in her father's cabin; and he and his son redoubled their laborious exertions for their support. But these were heavy claims; and the poor family but just contrived to live and struggle on, barely supplied with even the coarsest necessaries. When temptation assails the poor man, by holding out to

his grasp the means of lessening the hardships and privations of those dear to him as his own soul, shall we deal out to *him* hard measure of judgment, and make more indulgent allowance for those who, without the same excuses to plead, set him the example of yielding?

Campbell (having first been seduced into casual and inconsiderable ventures) was at last enrolled in the gang of smugglers who carried on their perilous trade along the coast—and from that time, though comparative plenty revisited his cottage, and even seasons of temporary abundance, the careless smile of innocent security no longer beamed on the faces of its elder inmates. Margaret struggled long, with well-principled firmness, against the infatuation of her husband and son; but flushed with success, emboldened by association with numbers, and finally rendered by habit quite insensible to the moral turpitude of their proceedings, they resisted her anxious remonstrances; and at last, heart-sick of fruitless opposition, and shrinking from the stern rebuke and angry frown of him who had been for so many happy years the affectionate partner of her joys and sor-

rows, she first passively acquiesced in their unlawful traffic, and in the end was brought to contribute her share towards its furtherance, by secretly disposing of the prohibited articles.

During my residence in the Isle of Wight, I had become acquainted with two or three families resident within a few miles of the spot where I had taken up my habitation. With one of these, consisting of a widow lady of rank and her two grown-up daughters, I had been previously acquainted in London, and at other places. They had been recommended by the medical adviser of the youngest daughter, who was threatened by a pulmonary affection, to try the effects of a winter at the back of the Island; and I was agreeably surprised to find them inhabitants of a beautiful villa, "a cottage of humility," at about three miles' distance from my own cabin at the under cliff. They were agreeable and accomplished women; and a few hours spent in their company formed a pleasing, and not unfrequent variety in my solitary life; and, in the dearth of society incident to their marine retreat, my fair friends condescended to tolerate, and even welcome the

eccentric old batchelor with their most gracious smiles.

One November evening, my ramble had terminated at the Villa; and I had just drawn my chair into the cheerful circle round the tea-table, when a powdered footman entered with a very knowing look, and spoke a few words, in a mysterious half-whisper, to his lady, who smilingly replied aloud, "Oh, tell her to come in; there is no one here, of whose observation she need be apprehensive." The communication of which assurance quickly ushered into the room my new acquaintance Margaret Campbell. An old rusty black bonnet was pulled down so as almost to shade her face from sight; and her dingy red cloak (under which she carried some bulky parcel) was strained tight round a figure that seemed endeavouring to contract itself into the least possible compass. At sight of me she started and shrunk back, drooping her eyes with a fearful curtsey. "Ah, Margaret!" I exclaimed, *too* well divining the secret of her darkling embassy. But the lady of the house encouraged her to advance, saying, "Oh! never mind Mr ——, he will not inform against us,

though he shakes his head so awfully. Well! have you brought the tea?"—"And the lace, and gloves, and the silk scarfs?" chimed in the young ladies, with eager curiosity sparkling in their eyes, as they almost dragged the precious budget, with their own fair hands, from beneath the poor woman's cloak. "Have you brought our scarfs at last? What a time we have been expecting them!"—"Yes indeed," echoed Lady Mary; "and depending on your promise, I have been quite distressed for tea. There is really no dependence on your word, Mrs Campbell; and yet I have been at some pains to impress on you a due sense of your Christian duties, amongst which, you have often heard me remark (and I am sure the tracts I have given you inculcate the same doctrine) that a strict attention to truth is one of the most essential. Well! where's the tea?" "Oh my lady," answered the poor woman, with a humbly deprecating tone and look, "if you did but know what risks we run to get these things, and how uncertain our trade is, you would not wonder that we cannot always oblige our customers so punctually as we would wish. I've brought the scarfs and the other

things for the young ladies; but the tea—" "What, no tea yet! Really, it is too bad, Mrs Campbell; I must try if other people are not more to be depended on; and, indeed, my maid has lately recommended to me a friend of hers, who is, she assures me, the most punctual creature in the world, as well as a very serious person, and desirous, besides, of subscribing to my penny collection for the conversion of the Hindoos, which you know I have never succeeded in getting you to do regularly, though I gave you that affecting tract, with the pictures, about Jaggernaut; and, in short, Mrs Campbell——" "Indeed, indeed, my lady, we have tried hard to get the goods for your ladyship, and your ladyship may stop the last three weeks for Jiggernot out of the payment for the scarfs, and you shall have the tea a bargain; but there's such a sharp look-out, now, and the Ranger has been cruizing off the island for this week past, and our people haven't been able to get nothing ashore; and yet I'm sure my husband and son have been upon the watch along the beach, and in the boat, these three nights, in all this dreadful weather: and to-night, though it blows a gale, they're out

again, God help 'em!" And the poor woman cast a tearful shuddering glance towards the window, against which (sounding wildly through the triple barrier of blinds, shutters, and the thick rich folds of the crimson curtains) a tempest of wind and sleet drove uproariously.

The lady condescended to be appeased by these assurances, that the foreign luxury should be obtained for her that night, if human exertions, made at the peril of human life, could succeed in landing it. The silks, &c. were examined, and approved of by the young ladies, and finally taken and paid for, after a world of haggling about "the price of blood!" as the purchase-money might too justly have been denominated, and after deducting from it, by their mamma's direction, Margaret's arrear of three-pence to her ladyship's Hindoo collection.

Mrs Campbell received her money with a heavy sigh, and humbly curtseying, withdrew from the presence, not without (involuntarily as it seemed) stealing an abashed glance of my countenance, as she passed me. She was no sooner out of the room, than her fair customers began expatiating with rap-

turous volubility on the beauty and cheapness of their purchases, an inconsistency of remark that puzzled me exceedingly, as, not five minutes before, while bargaining with the seller, they had averred her goods to be of very inferior manufacture, and exorbitantly dear. "Ay, but ——" observed the managing mamma, "you were both in such a hurry, or you might have made better bargains. But it's always the way; and yet I kept winking at you all the while. I should have got those things half as cheap again."

Indulgent as I am by nature to the little whims and foibles of the sex, I could not, on the present occasion, refrain from hinting to my fair friends a part of what was passing in my mind. At first they laughed at my quizzical scruples, resorting, for their defence, to the common-place remark, that "the few trifles they occasionally purchased, could make no material difference; for that the people would smuggle all the same, and meet with plenty of encouragement from others, if not from them." And when I pressed the question a little further, suggesting to their consciences, whether *all* who encouraged the forbidden

traffic were not, in great measure, responsible for the guilt incurred, and the lives lost in the prosecution of it, they bid me not talk of such horrid things, and hurried away their recent purchases in a *sort of* disconcerted silence, that spoke anything rather than remorse, and purposed reformation. My "sermonising," as it was termed, seemed to have thrown a spell over the frank sociability that usually characterized our evening coteries. Conversation languished—the piano was out of tune, and the young ladies' voices not *in tune.* Their mamma broke her netting silk every three minutes; and, from a dissertation on the rottenness of modern silk, digressed insensibly into the subject of foreign missions, ladies' committees, and branch Bible associations; ever and anon, as the storm waxed louder and louder, interspersing her remarks with pathetic lamentations at the perverseness with which the very elements seemed to conspire with government against the safe landing of the commodities her "soul longed after."

The storm did indeed rage fearfully, and its increasing violence warned me to retrace my homeward way, before the disappearance of a yet glim-

mering moon should leave me to pursue it in total darkness. Flapping my hat over my eyes, and wrapping myself snugly round in the thick folds of a huge boat-cloak, I sallied forth from the cheerful brightness of Lady Mary's boudoir, into the darkness visible of the wild scene without. Wildly magnificent it was, in truth! My path lay along the shore, against which mountainous waves came rolling in long ridges, with a sound like thunder. Sleet, falling at intervals, mingled with the sea surf, whirled high into the air in showers of foam, and both were driven into my face by the south-west blast, with a violence that obliged me frequently to stop and gasp for breath. Large masses of clouds now hurried in sublime disorder across the dim struggling moon, whose pale watery rays yet gleamed at intervals with ghastly indistinctness, along the white sands, and on the frothy crests of the advancing billows.

As I pursued my way, buffeting the conflicting elements, other sounds, methought, appeared to mingle in their wild uproar. The hoarse and shrill intonation of human voices seemed blended with the wailing and sobbing of the storm, and the

creaking and labouring of planks, and the splash of oars, was distinguishable, I thought, in the long lull of the retreating waves. I was not deceived; a momentary gleam of moonlight glanced on the white sails of a lugger in the offing. And one of her boats —a black speck on the billows—was discernible working her way laboriously towards the coast. At that moment, another boat shot along close in-shore, with the alacrity of lightning; and, at the same instant, a man rushed by me, whose tall remarkable figure I recognized for Campbell, even in that dim momentary glance. He darted on with the rapidity of an arrow, and immediately I heard a long shrill whistle, echoed and re-echoed by another and another, from the cliffs, from the shore, and from the sea. Those sights and sounds indicated too plainly that the demons of mischief were at work, and the time and scene were gloomily in unison with their hour of evil agency. The moon had almost withdrawn her feeble light, and I could no longer discern any objects but the white sands under my feet, and the sea-foam that frothed over them. More than two miles of my homeward way yet lay before me, and

in that space I should have to cross two gullies furrowed through the sands by land-springs from the cliffs.

Intermingled and bedded in these were numerous rocky fragments, and foundered masses of the cliff, amongst which it was easy to pick one's daylight way; but the impenetrable darkness that now enveloped every object, made me pause, to consider how far it might be safe, or even practicable, for a stranger to persevere in the wave-washed path. A light streaming from one of the windows of Campbell's cottage, a few furlongs up the beach, decided the result of my deliberations, and I turned towards the little dwelling, purposing to apply there for a light and a guide, should the younger Campbell chance to be at home.

I had no need to knock for admittance, the door was wide open, and on its threshold stood the mother of the family. The light from within slanted athwart her face and figure, and I could perceive that she was listening with intense breathlessness, and with eyes straining, as if they sought to pierce the darkness, towards the quarter from whence I was approaching.

Her ear soon caught the sound of my step on the loose shingle, and she started forward, exclaiming, "Oh, Amy! thank God! here they are!" The young woman sprang to the door with a light, and its beams, alas! revealed my then unwelcome face, instead of that of the father and husband.—"Oh, sir! I thought—" was poor Margaret's hurried, unfinished exclamation, when she discovered her mistake, "but *you* are kindly welcome," she added, quickly recovering herself, "for this is not a night for any Christian soul to be out in, though my husband and son,—Oh, sir! they are both—both tossing in one little boat on that dreadful sea; and that is not all —the Ranger's boats are on the look-out for the lugger they are going to help to unload, and God knows what may happen. I prayed and beseeched them for this night only to stay peaceably at home, such a night of weather as was working up, but all in vain. We had promised my lady, and the cargo was to be landed to-night. Oh, sir! my lady, and the like of she, little think—" and the poor woman burst into tears. This was no time for admonition and reproof, or for those consolatory observations so

often made to the unhappy, of "I told you it would come to this;" or "This would not have happened if you had taken my advice;" or "Well, you have brought it all upon yourself."

When God has spoken, the fellow-mortal may well forbear all language but that of sympathy and comfort, and *He* had now spoken to the hearts of these poor people. The fatal consequences of their illicit traffic, and its nefariousness, were brought home to their minds more forcibly by the agonizing suspense they were enduring, than could have been effected by any arguments I might have laboured to enforce. I did my best to allay those terrors—to dispel them would have been impossible, while the tempest raged louder and louder, and independent of that, there were other grounds of too reasonable apprehension. I suggested the probability of Campbell's not being in the boat, as he had passed me on shore so recently, but at all events he and his son were abroad with a desperate gang, expecting, and armed against resistance Forgetful of my own purpose of borrowing a lantern to proceed homeward, I entered the cabin with the distressed females, whose

looks thanked me for not turning away from them in their hour of trial.

A cheerful fire brightened the interior of the little dwelling, where neatness and order still bore testimony that the habits of its inmates had at one time been those of peaceful and honest industry. The fire-light gleamed ruddy red on the clean brick floor; a carved oak table, and a few heavy old chairs of the same fashion, were bright with the polish of age and housewifery; and one, distinguished by a high-stuffed back and arms and a green cushion, was placed close beside the ingle-nook, the easily distinguished seat of the father of the family. His pipe lay close at hand (the curious meer-schaum pipe) on the high mantle-piece, where a pair of brass candlesticks, a few china cups, some tall slim ale glasses (their long shanks ornamented with white spiral lines), two foreign shells, some little French pictures of saints in all the colours of the rainbow, and sundry tobacco-stoppers of fantastical figure, were arranged in symmetrical order. The dresser was elaborately set out with its rows of yellow ware, its mugs of various shape and size, and quaint diversity of motto and device, its ja-

panned tray and mahogany tea-chest, proudly conspicuous in the centre. The walls were hung round with nets, baskets, and fishing apparatus, and high over the chimney-piece, part of a whale's jaw, and two long crossed peacock's feathers, were affixed in a sort of trophy. All sorts of useful and nondescript articles were suspended to the rafter; but Campbell's duck-gun, and his two clumsy pistols, rested not on the hooks he was wont to call his armoury. An unfinished net was suspended by the chimney corner, at which the youthful widow had recently been employed. She resumed her seat and shuttle, but the hand that held it often rested idly on her lap, while her eyes were rivetted with mournful solicitude on the countenance of her mother.

There was something particularly interesting in the appearance of this young woman. Not beauty of feature, for, excepting a pair of fine dark eyes, shaded by very long black eyelashes, there was nothing uncommon in her countenance, and her naturally dark and colourless complexion was now deeply tinged with the sallow hue of sickness. Her lips were whiter than her cheeks, and her uncommonly

tall figure, bowed down with the burthen of weakness and sorrow, was attenuated to a state that would have amounted to gaunt meagreness, had the frame been less slightly and delicately formed. But when she lifted up those dark eyes, their melancholy light was touchingly in unison with the general character of that shadowy figure that seemed almost transparent to the working of the wounded spirit within.

Amy's young heart had never recovered the shock of her William's untimely death, and her timid tender spirit was overburthened with a heavy load of conscious self-reproach, that for her sake, and that of her infants, her father and brother had involved themselves in the perilous unlawfulness of their present courses.

As she sat looking in her mother's face, I could read in hers the thoughts that were passing in her mind. At last, a large tear, that had been slowly gathering, swelled over her quivering eyelid, and rising suddenly, and letting fall the netting and shuttle, she came and edged herself on one corner of her mother's chair, and clasping one arm round her neck, and hiding her face on her shoulder, sobbed

out, "Mother!"—"My Amy! my dear child!" whispered the fond parent, tenderly caressing her, "why should you always reproach yourself so? You, who have been a good dutiful child, and a comfort to us, and a blessing, ever since you was born? Before your poor father fell into evil company, and hearkened to their wicked persuasions, did we not contrive to maintain ourselves, and your dear fatherless babies, by God's blessing on our honest industry? And where should you have taken refuge, my precious Amy, but under your parents' roof?" A look of eloquent gratitude and a tender silent kiss were Amy's reply to that soothing whisper. For a few moments this touching intercourse of hearts beguiled them from the intense anxiety with which they had been listening to every sound from without; but the redoubling violence of the storm roused them fearfully from that temporary abstraction, and they started, and shuddered, and looked in one another's faces, and in mine, as if imploring comfort, when, alas! I had only sympathy to bestow. The conflict of winds and waters was indeed tremendous, and I felt too forcibly convinced, that, if the

poor Campbells were exposed to it in their little nut-shell of a boat, nothing short of a miracle could save them from a watery grave.

There was some chance, however, that the landing of the contraband bales might have been effected by the lugger's boats without help from shore; and in that case, the prolonged absence of the husband and son might arise from their having proceeded with others of the gang to convey them to some inland place of concealment. The probability of this suggestion was eagerly caught at by the anxious pair, but the ray of hope elicited from it, gleamed with transient brightness. A gust of wind, more awful than any that had preceded it, rushed past with deafening uproar, and as it died away, low sobs, and shrill moaning sounds, seemed mingled with its deep bass. We were all silent—now straining our sight from the cabin door into the murky darkness without—now gathering together round the late blazing hearth, where the neglected embers emitted only a fitful glimmer. The wind whistling through every chink and cranny, waved to and fro the flame of the small candle declining in its socket, and at

last the hour of twelve was struck by "the old clock that ticked behind the door" in its dark heavy case. At that moment a large venerable-looking book, that lay with a few others on a hanging shelf near the chimney, slipped from the edge on which it had been overbalanced, and fell with a dull heavy sound at Margaret's feet. It was the Bible that had belonged to her husband's mother, and, stooping to pick up and replace it, she perceived that it had fallen open at the leaf, where, twenty-two years back from that very day, the venerable parent had recorded with pious gratitude the birth of her son's first-born. "Ah, my dear son! my own good Maurice!" ejaculated the heart-struck mother, "I was not used to forget the day God gave thee to me—Thou wert the first to leave me, and now—" She was interrupted by the low indistinct murmur of a human voice, that sounded near us. I started—but Amy's ear was familiar with the tone—it was that of one of her little ones, talking and moaning in its sleep. The small chamber where they lay opened from that we were in, and the young mother crept softly towards the bed of her sleeping infants. She was still

bending over them, when the outer door was suddenly dashed open, and Campbell—Campbell himself, burst into the cottage. Oh! with what a shriek of ecstasy was he welcomed—with what a rapture of inarticulate words, clinging embraces, and tearful smiles!—But the joy was short-lived, and succeeded by a sudden chill of nameless apprehension; for, disengaging himself roughly from the arms of his wife and daughter, he made straight towards his own old chair, and flinging himself back in it, covered his face with his clasped hands. One only cause for this fearful agitation suggested itself to his trembling wife—"My son! my son!" she shrieked out, grasping her husband's arm—"What have you done with him, Campbell? He is dead! He is murdered!—Oh! I knew it would come to this—"

"Peace, woman!" shouted Campbell, in a voice of thunder, uncovering his face as he started up wildly from his chair with a look of appalling fierceness,—"Peace, woman! your son is safe;" then his voice abruptly sinking into a hoarse low tone, he added, "*This* is not *his* blood," and he flung on the table before him his broad white cross belt, on which the

tokens of a deadly fray were frightfully apparent. "Campbell!" I said, "unhappy man! what have you done? To what have you exposed your wretched family? For their sakes escape—escape for your life, while the darkness favours you." He looked at me for a moment as if wavering, but immediately resuming the voice and aspect of desperate sternness, replied, "It is too late—they are at my heels—the blood-hounds! They tracked me home." And while he yet spoke, the trampling of feet, and the sound of loud voices confirmed his words. The door burst open, and several rough-looking men in sailors' garb rushed into the cottage.

"Ah! we have you, my man," they vociferated, "we have *you* safe, though the young villain has given us the slip."—"Villain!" shouted Campbell, "who dares call my boy a villain?" But checking himself instantaneously, he added in a subdued, quiet tone, "But I am in your power, and you must say what you please, and do what you will." And so saying, he once more threw himself back in his old chair, in sullen submissiveness. The women clung weeping around him, his unhappy wife ex-

claiming, "Oh! what has he done? If there has been mischief, it is not his fault—he would not hurt a fly—for all his rough way he is as tender-hearted as a child.—Richard! Richard! speak to them, tell them they have mistaken you for another." He neither spoke nor moved, nor lifted his eyes up from the floor on which they were rivetted. "No mistake at all, mistress!" said one of the men, "he has only shot one of our people, that's all, and we must fit him with a pair of these bracelets." And so saying, he began fastening a pair of handcuffs on Campbell's wrists. He offered no resistance, and seemed, indeed, almost unconscious of what was doing, when the eldest of Amy's children, a pretty little girl about four years old, who, having been awakened by the noise, had crept softly from her bed, and made her way unperceived towards her grandfather, burst into a fit of loud sobbing, and climbing up upon his knees, and clasping her little arms about his neck, and laying her soft cheek to his dark rough one, lisped out—"Send away naughty men, grandad—naughty men frighten Amy."

The springs of sensibility that seemed frozen up in Campbell's bosom, were touched electrically by the loving voice and caresses of his little darling. He hugged her to his bosom, which began to heave convulsively, and for a few minutes the tears of the old man and the little child mingled in touching silence. As he clasped her thus, the handcuff that was already fastened on his left wrist pressed painfully on her tender arm, and as she shrank from it he seemed first to perceive the ignominious fetter. His features were wrung by a sudden convulsion; but the expression was momentary, and turning round his head towards his weeping daughter, he said quietly, "Amy, my dear child! take the poor baby—I little thought, dear lamb! she would ever find hurt or harm in her old grandfather's arms."

It was a touching scene—even the rough sailors seemed affected by it, and they were more gently completing their operation of attaching the other manacle, when again voices and footsteps were heard approaching; again the door opened, and another party of sailors entered, bearing amongst them a

ghastly burthen, the lifeless body of the unfortunate young man, who had been shot in the execution of his duty, by the rash hand of the wretched man before us, whose fire was not the less fatal for having been discharged almost aimlessly in the bustle of a desperate conflict. "We've missed our boats, and we could not let him lie bleeding on the beach, poor fellow!" said one of the new comers, in reply to an exclamation of surprise from those of their party already in possession of the cottage. Campbell's agitation was fearful to behold; he turned shuddering from the sight of his victim—the women stood petrified with horror; I alone retaining some degree of self-possession, advanced to examine if human aid might yet avail to save the poor youth, who was laid, apparently a corpse, on three chairs next the door.

Comprehending my purpose, the humane and serviceable tenderness of poor Margaret's nature prevailed even in that hour of her extreme distress, and she came trembling to assist me in the painful examination.

The young man's face had dropt aside on one shoulder towards the wall, and was almost covered

by the luxuriant hair (a sailor's pride) which had escaped from the confining ribbon, and fell in dark wet masses across his cheek and brow. His right hand hung down over the side of the chair, and taking it into mine, I found that it was already as cold as marble, and that all pulsation had ceased.

Margaret had as promptly as her agitation would permit removed his black handkerchief, and unbuttoned the collar of his checked shirt, and though she started and shuddered inwardly at the sight of blood thickly congealed over his bosom, persisted heroically in her trying task. A handkerchief had been hastily stuffed down as a temporary pledget into the wounded breast. In removing it, Margaret's finger became entangled by a black silk cord passed round the youth's neck, to which a small locket was suspended. She was hastily putting it aside, when the light held by one of the sailors fell upon the medallion (a perforated gold pocket-piece), and her eye glancing towards it, a half-choked exclamation broke from her lips, and looking up I saw her standing motionless—breathless—her hands clasped together with convulsive vehemence, and her eyes

almost starting from their sockets, in the state of indescribable horror with which they were rivetted on that bosom-token. At last a cry (such a one as my ears never before heard, the recollection of which still curdles the blood in my veins) burst from her lips, and brought her daughter and husband (even the unhappy man himself, manacled as he was) to the side of his victim, over whom Margaret was still bending in that intense agony. But at last, as if suddenly conscious that her husband stood beside her, and was gazing with her on that ghastly spectacle, (while large cold drops gathered on his brow, and his white lips quivered as he gazed,) she looked up in his face with such a look as I never shall forget. It was one of horrid calmness, more fearful to behold than the wildest expression of passionate agony, and grasping his fettered hand firmly in one of hers, and with the other pointing to the perforated gold piece, as it lay on the mangled bosom of the dead youth, she said in a low, distinct, unnatural voice—"*Who* is that, Richard?" He started, and his eyes, which had been rivetted with an expression

of deep horror on the bloody work of his rash hand, now caught sight of the gold token, and from that wandered wildly and hurriedly over the lifeless form, while his whole frame shook as if in the paroxysm of an ague fit. Gradually the universal tremor subsided—the wandering eyes settled into a ghastly stare, the convulsive workings of the muscles of his face gave way to a rigid fixedness, and he stood like one petrified in the very burst of despair. Once more Margaret repeated, in that quiet deliberate tone, "*Who* is that, Richard?" and suddenly leaning forward, dashed aside from the face of the corpse the dark locks that had hitherto concealed it. Then clasping her hands in a sort of joyous triumph, she cried out in a shrill voice—"I knew it was my son! My son is come home at last! Richard, welcome your son!" and snatching her husband's hand, she endeavoured to pull him forward towards the pale face of the dead. But he to whom this heart-rending appeal was spoken, replied only by one deep groan, that seemed to burst up, as it were, the very fountains of his heart. He staggered back a few

paces—his eyes closed—the convulsion of a moment passed over his features, and he sunk down as inanimate as the pale corpse, that was still clasped with frantic rapture to the bosom of the brain-struck mother.

A FAIR PLACE AND PLEASANT.

A FAIR place and pleasant, this same world of ours!
Who says there are serpents 'mongst all the sweet flowers?
Who says, every blossom we pluck has its thorn?
Pho! pho! laugh those musty old sayings to scorn.

If you roam to the tropics for flowers rich and rare,
No doubt there are serpents, and deadly ones, there—
If none but the rose will content ye, 'tis true,
You may get sundry scratches, and ugly ones too.

But prithee look there—Could a serpent find room
In that close-woven moss, where those violets bloom?
And reach me that woodbine (you'll get it with ease)—
Now, wiseacre! where are the thorns, if you please?

I say there are Angels in every spot,
Though our dim earthly vision discerneth them not;
That they're guardians assigned to the least of us all,
By Him who takes note if a sparrow but fall;

That they're aye flitting near us, around us, above,
On missions of kindness, compassion, and love—
That they're glad when we're happy, disturb'd at our tears.
Distress'd at our weaknesses, failings, and fears;

That they care for the least of our innocent joys,
Though we're cozen'd like children with trifles and toys,
And can lead us to bloom beds, and lovely ones too,
Where snake never harbour'd, and thorn never grew.

THE THREE FRIENDS.

STANZAS ACCOMPANYING A PICTURE.

We three were loving friends!—a lowly life
Of humble peace, obscure content, we led:
Stealing away, withouten noise or strife,
Like some small streamlet in its mossy bed.

We had our joys in common—wisdom, wit,
And learned lore, had little share in those:
Thus, by the winter fire we used to sit,
Or in the summer evening's warm repose,

At our sweet bowery window, op'ning down
To the green grass, beneath the flowering lime,
When the deep curfew from the distant town
Came mellow'd, like the voice of olden time;

And our grave neighbour, from the barn hard by,
The great grey owl, sail'd out on soundless wings,
And the pale stars, like beams of memory,
Bright'ned as twilight veil'd all earthly things.

'Twas then we used to sit, as pictured *thus*—
My pillow, as in childhood, still the same,
Those venerable knees, and close to us,
Old Ranger, pressing oft his jealous claim—

And then I loved to feel that gentle hand
Laid like a blessing on my head—to hear
The "auld-warld" stories, even at command,
By all but *her* forgotten many a year;

And then we talk'd together of the days
We both remember'd—and of those who slept—
And the old dog look'd up with wistful gaze,
As if he, too, that faithful record kept.

We three were loving friends!—Now one is gone—
And one—poor feeble thing!—declineth fast—
And well I wot, the days are drawing on
Will find me here, the lonely and the last;

But not to tarry long; and when I go,
The stranger's hand will have dominion here,
And lay thy walls, my peaceful dwelling! low,
As my last lodging in the church-yard near.

1824.

TO MY BIRDIE.

HERE's only you an' me, Birdie! here's only you an' me!
An' there you sit, you humdrum fowl!
Sae mute an' mopish as an owl—
Sour companie!

Sing me a little sang, Birdie! lilt up a little lay!—
When folks are here fu' fain are ye
To stun them wi' yere minstrelsie
The lee lang day;

An' now we're only twa, Birdie! an' now we're only twa—
'Twere sure but kind an' cozie, Birdie!
To charm, wi' yere wee hurdy-gurdie,
Dull Care awa.

Ye ken, when folks are paired, Birdie! ye ken, when folks are paired—
Life's fair, an' fou', and freakish weather,
An' light an' lumbrin' loads thegither,
Maun a' be shared;

An' shared wi' lovin' hearts, Birdie! wi' lovin' hearts an' free—
Fu' fashious loads may weel be borne,
An' roughest roads to velvet turn,
Trod cheerfully.

We've a' our cares an' crosses, Birdie! we've a' our cares an' crosses—
But then to sulk an sit sae glum—
Hout! tout!—what gude o' that can come
To mend ane's losses?

Ye're clipt in wiry fence, Birdie! yere clipt in wiry fence—
An' aiblins I, gin I mote gang
Upo' a wish, wad be or lang
Wi' frien's far hence;

But what's a wish, ye ken, Birdie! but what's a wish,
ye ken?
Nae cantrip naig, like hers of Fife,
Wha darnit wi' the auld wierd wife,
Flood, fell, an' fen.

'Tis true, ye're furnish'd fair, Birdie! 'tis true, ye're
furnish'd fair,
Wi' a braw pair o' bonnie wings,
Wad lift ye whar yon lav'rock sings,
High up i' th' air;

But then that wire's sae strang, Birdie! but then that
wire's sae strang!
An' I mysel' sae seemin' free—
Nae wings have I to waften me
Whar fain I'd gang.

An' say we'd baith our wills, Birdie! we'd each our
wilfu' way—
Whar lav'rocks hover, falcons fly,
An' snares an' pitfa's aften lie
Whar wishes stray.

An' ae thing weel I wot, Birdie! An' ae thing weel I
wot—
There's Ane abune the highest sphere,
Wha cares for a' His creatures here,
Marks ev'ry lot;

Wha guards the crowned king, Birdie! wha guards the
crowned king,
An' taketh heed for sic as me—
Sae little worth—an' e'en for thee,
Puir witless thing!

Sae noo, let's baith cheer up, Birdie! an' sin' we're
only twa—
Aff han'—let's ilk ane do our best,
To ding that crabbit, canker'd pest,
Dull Care awa'!

OH! ENVIE'S AN UNCANNIE GUEST!

Oh! Envie's an uncanny guest,
I've heard it a'way, naethin' doubtin';
An' yet, she bideth i' my breast,
An' winna gang, for a' my routin'.

She does na wear her foulest face
To scare me quite, the crafty quean!
But whiles, a sentimental grace—
A saft, poetic, pensive mien,—

As, "Hark!" quo' she, "that mirthfu' sang,
Yon Birdie's, frae the dancin' rowans,
An' mark yon Lassie link alang,
Sae lightsome, o'er the dewy gowans.

" Oh, warldly honours! warldly walth!
How far thae lowly lots surpass ye—
Contentit labour, jocund health,
O' yon sma Bird, an' simple Lassie.

" Blythe, bonnie creatures! fain would I,
Tho' walth an' fame I've nane to barter—"
Sae softly thus will Envie sigh—
Sae saintly, like a Virgin Martyr.

Nor scowleth she, wi' fiendish leuks,
At heaps o' gowd, or laurel crowns,
But gravely whispers, " Gowd buys beuks,
An' lovin' lauds, an' silver soun's!"

An that's but truth, an' little wrang,
We'll a' alloo, in sich-like havers—
But let alane the jaud, or lang
She starts mair guilefu' clishmaclavers—

As, " Leuk!" quo' she, " yon burly chiel,
Wi' red, roun face, like Hob the Miller,
What blund'rin turn o' Fortune's wheel
Gat him the luck o' mickle siller?

" What earthly bliss conceiveth he
Ayont a mess o' sav'ry pottage—
A flarin' coach—a shrievaltie—
A gimcrack castle, or a cottage?

" An' tither wise-like wizen carle
Wi' visage yellow as a crocus,
An' eyes a' pucker'd in a harl,
That peer thro's han' (which mak's a focus)—

" At yonner awfu' brick-dust daub,
His bran-new Reubens—Reubens! horrit!
Ay, warrantit by Mynheer Schaub,
Wha's pooched the ninny's thoosan's for it.

" An' that auld crabbit chuff! wha pays
Doon hunderts for an auld Elzeevir;
An' that young fule! wi' four blood bays,
An' nae mair spirit than a weaver,

" For aught that's really fine an gran'—
An' yet the cretur's travell'd Europe,
An' tauks o' Rome, the Vatican,
The Greeks, the Louvre, Voltaire, an' Merope.

" An' that gay Dowager an' daughters,
Wha've been abroad, an' brought back hame
French laces—graces—scented waters—
Mosaics—Cameos, an'—Fame.

" An' a' thae folk rin to an' fra,
An' scatter gowd like chucky stanes;
While *ither* folk, for aught I knaw,
As *gude*, if no as *lucky* anes—"

" Haud, Madame Envie!—Are ye there?"
Quoth I,—" methinks, frae sma' beginnin's,
For a' yere sanctimonious air,
Ye're gettin' on till serious sinnin's.

" What's ways o' ither folk to me?
Or a' their gowd—or hoo they spend it?
Fause Hizzie! let a bodie be,
Wha'd fain be humble and contentit."

" Oh! very weel—nae need," quo' she,
" To rage wi' virtue sae heroic;
Mak much o' yere philosophie,
Ye'll need it a', my Leddy Stoic!

" When Beltane comes, an' a' the dells
An' a' the banks an' braes are ringin'
Wi' bleat o' lambs, an' tinklin' bells,
An' whimplin' burns, an' lintwhites singin';

" And a' the bonnie broomie knowes
Wi tufts o' flowerin' May are crested,
Festoon'd wi' monie a wildin' rose,
An' vilets, 'mangst the auld roots nested;

" An' ev'ry whiff o' win's a freight,
Frae Heav'n itsel', o' sweet sensation—
An' ev'ry livin' thing's elate
Wi' Nature's blissfu' renovation;

" An ye're a captive—sick an' lane,
Sae sadly frae ye're window peerin',
Ye'll need a heart o' flint and stane
To bar me fairly out o' hearin'.

" An' liltin' loud, like Merle in June,
Comes kintra Joan, but loupin' pass ye—
I guess we'll wauk that auncient croon"—
" Oh Heav'n! were I some Cottage Lassie!"

RANGER'S GRAVE.

March 1825.

He's dead and gone!—He's dead and gone!
And the lime-tree branches wave,
And the daisy blows,
And the green grass grows,
Upon his grave.

He's dead and gone!—He's dead and gone!
And he sleeps by the flowering lime,
Where he loved to lie,
When the sun was high,
In Summer time.

We've laid him there, for I could not bear
His poor old bones to hide
In some dark hole,
Where rat and mole
And blind worms bide.

We've laid him there, where the blessed air
Disports with the lovely light,
And raineth showers
Of those sweet flowers
So silver white;

Where the blackbird sings, and the wild bee's wings
Make music all day long,
And the cricket at night
(A dusky sprite!)
Takes up the song.

He loved to lie, where his wakeful eye
Could keep me still in sight,
Whence a word or a sign,
Or a look of mine,
Brought him like light.

Nor word, nor sign, nor look of mine,
From under the lime-tree bough,
With bark and bound,
And frolic round,
Shall bring him now.

But he taketh his rest, where he loved best
In the days of his life to be,
And that place will not
Be a common spot
Of earth to me.

THE END.

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